



Daily Report

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Signing Chemical Weapons Treaty Called 'Risky'

NC0803142993 Cairo MENA in English 1318 GMT
8 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—Israel has more than 200 nuclear [war]heads and missiles that can reach Arab capitals, 'Adnan 'Imran, Arab League assistant secretary general for political affairs, said today.

Forcing Arab states to sign the treaty on the non-proliferation of chemical weapons would be a risky act, given the fact that Israel's stockpile of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons is overlooked, 'Imran said.

The Arabs believe that the Middle East should be rendered free from all weapons of mass destruction, he said.

Arabs are beset by the Israeli nuclear threat, the Arab League official added.

Islamic Affairs

King Fahd Thanked for Afghan Peace Talks

LD0803200693 Riyadh SPA in English 1930 GMT
8 Mar 93

[Text] Jeddah, March 8, SPA—Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference [OIC] Dr. Hamid Algabid has sent a cable of thanks and appreciation to the custodian of the two holy mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz in which he expressed the organization's appreciation of the monarch's initiative to sponsor peace and national reconciliation talks in Afghanistan.

The cable praised King Fahd's historic role to prevent the loss of the fruits of the Afghan jihad.

It also pointed to the efforts exerted by the OIC boost peace and urge Afghan leaders to surpass their differences through constructive, brotherly dialogue. Dr. Algabid expressed relief for the positive outcome of Afghan peace talks with the active and constructive participation of Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Prince Turki al-Faysal.

Palestinian Affairs

UK Decision To Resume PLO Contacts Viewed

JN0903103193 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
9 Mar 93 pp 1, 5

["Special to the JORDAN TIMES" by Wafa' 'Amr]

[Text] Amman—Palestinian leader Faysal al-Husayni departed for London Monday [8 March] for talks with British government ministers along with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) officials in what was expected to be the first meeting in upgraded contacts between the British government and the PLO.

Mr. al-Husayni, senior adviser to the Palestinian delegation to peace talks with Israel, is scheduled to meet with Douglas Hogg, junior minister at the Foreign Office, Tuesday. The meeting, attended by three senior PLO officials, will be followed by an expected British announcement that London was upgrading the level of official contacts with the PLO, informed sources said.

The meeting would be the first between a British minister and PLO officials after London suspended high-level contacts with the PLO in late 1990 at the peak of the Gulf crisis.

A Tunis-based PLO source said the leadership of the PLO was informed of the British government's decision to upgrade official contacts with the organisation four days ago.

"We delegated Faysal al-Husayni from the occupied territories, Hayil al-Fahum from the PLO's political department, and 'Afif Safiyah, the PLO's representative in London, to meet with the British officials, the PLO source said.

Prior to his departure, Mr. al-Husayni said his talks with Mr. Hogg would include the Middle East peace process, the crisis sparked by Israel's Dec. 17 expulsion of more than 400 Palestinians and other related issues.

In Amman, following a meeting with Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin Shakir Monday morning, Mr. al-Husayni said Palestinians were awaiting an Israeli approval of a six-point compromise deal aimed at solving the expellees crisis.

He told the Jordan Times that Palestinian-American contacts and American-Israeli contacts were continuing with the aim of reaching a "package agreement over the six-points."

"Contacts will continue until the Israeli position falls in line with the six points," he said. "our emphasis is on achieving an Israeli commitment that it will not expel Palestinians in the future, and that it will set a timetable for the phased return of expellees in line with U.N. Security Council Resolution 799.

Mr. al-Husayni said he believed it would be very difficult for Arabs to resume peace talks with Israel if the Palestinian demands were not met by the Jewish state.

Mr. Safiyah, the PLO representative in London, said Tuesday's meeting in London would focus on the peace process and means of solving the problem of the Palestinian evictees.

He said the meeting—considered a "breakthrough" by Palestinians—and the British move to upgrade contacts were aimed at helping the PLO to arrive at a decision to resume the peace talks.

Mr. Safiyah, in a telephone interview with the Jordan Times from London, said the meeting was highly significant since it "reflects the British government's recognition of the unity of the Palestinian people both inside the occupied territories and in the diaspora."

"Israel and some Western countries expect the PLO to remain moderate, to continue its moderating influence, and to accept being marginalised at the same time," Mr. Safiyah said. "It is too much to ask from the PLO."

There was no official confirmation of the British move, but a Foreign Office spokesman contacted by the Jordan Times said official engagements were usually announced on the same day.

Palestinian sources considered the British step a signal of a more active future European role in the Middle East peace process.

"It is not a new political decision. It is simply the resumption of an old British policy. However, it has political significance considering the timing of the move," a PLO source said.

A spokesman at the British Foreign Office in London, insisting on anonymity, said "ministerial contacts with the PLO were cut off during the Gulf crisis—on Sept. 2, 1990—as a result of the organisation's support for (Iraqi President) Saddam Husayn."

Since then, British contacts with the PLO were confined to the British ambassador in Tunis.

The spokesman declined to explain why London was amending its policy. "Here in London, we keep our policies under constant review."

It was understood that the status of the PLO office in London would remain unchanged despite the upgrading of contacts.

The British government does not recognise the State of Palestine declared by PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in 1988; it does not recognise the PLO office in London as an embassy. But it does consider the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people, and the British ambassador to Tunis has on many occasions met with Mr. 'Arafat, according to PLO sources.

A senior Palestinian official in Tunis believed the timing of the British move "was aimed at appeasing the Palestinians, and signals a European intention to play a more active and direct role in the Middle East peace process with the approval of the United States."

"A formal relationship with the PLO will open a crack for London through which it can play a vital role in the Middle East; British interests are involved here," he said.

The expected British move followed a Belgian decision last week to upgrade the status of the PLO mission in

Brussels in what was seen as part of European Community (EC) steps to improve ties with the PLO and assume a higher-profile role in the peace process.

"We expect a flurry of activities by the EC soon after the meetings in London, signalling an American approval of a more active European role in the peace process," a senior Palestinian official said.

The official said an EC "troika"—representing the present and immediate past and future presidencies of the commission—was expected to visit Washington next week in a bid to explore the possibilities of the community expanding its role in the efforts for Arab-Israeli peace.

'Ashrawi Interviewed on Gaza Strip, Deportees

NC0903074493 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic
0610 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Telephone interview with Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, official spokesman of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, in Jerusalem, by Shihatah Abu-al-Majd, in Cairo, carried on the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Abu-al-Majd] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi: Recent Israeli statements [words indistinct] to the effect that Israel wants to withdraw from the occupied Gaza Strip. What, in your view, is the aim behind these statements?

['Ashrawi] I believe these are personal statements that do not reflect an official stance. They are emotional and spontaneous reactions to a difficult situation that Israel cannot control and so it comes out with irresponsible statements. On withdrawal from the Gaza Strip: Of course we want withdrawal from all the occupied territories, but the motive for these statements is basically racist and reflects Israel's inability to control the situation. There is an attempt to split the issue and to engage in geographical aspects so that they can say Israel does not need Gaza for security, ideological, or territorial needs. This only makes the issue much more difficult.

[Abu-al-Majd] Dr. 'Ashrawi, we have heard such statements about withdrawal from Gaza or withdrawal from the Golan before each round of talks, but when we come to the negotiations we do not find these statements on the table. What are Israel's aims in all this?

['Ashrawi] I believe Israel creates confusion with these conflicting statements, which have no substance, especially when it comes to the issues under negotiation. In the negotiations, Israel has not recognized the occupied territories as such [words indistinct]. It does not recognize the issue of occupation, meaning that it does not recognize the need to withdraw from these territories. It refuses to apply the Fourth Geneva Convention until withdrawal is effected.

[Abu-al-Majd] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, what is happening in the occupied territories with this strange siege that Israel has imposed on the Gaza Strip in the past few days?

[Ashrawi] The living conditions of the Palestinian people here have deteriorated. The things they suffer daily are worsening and the Israeli repression is escalating. As you know, this is a type of collective punishment to which Israel always resorts when it faces a situation it cannot control. Then it punishes an entire people. The closure of Gaza is a type of collective punishment that has heightened the escalation, the bitterness, and confrontation. When it deprives a people of its livelihood and turns its life into a collective prison, there are many negative reactions.

[Abu-al-Majd] But if Israel surprises the world and makes such a decision, that is, if it decides to withdraw from the occupied Gaza Strip or starts to withdraw without referring to the Palestinian authority, are you ready to administer the Strip?

[Ashrawi] Things are not so simple. Neither a sudden withdrawal nor handover of the Strip to the Palestinian people is easy. But if Israel has a plan for total withdrawal, of course we are ready for it. I believe that if Israel wants to withdraw from the Gaza Strip, we will not cling to it and tell it: Stay as an occupying force. Freedom is the right of the Palestinian people and every individual. It is our right to retrieve every inch of [occupied territory]. I believe that if there is not total withdrawal—as there should be, according to a well-prepared and internationally approved plan within the framework of international legitimacy—Israel must hand over the Strip to the only party qualified to take over the occupied territory, namely the PLO.

[Abu-al-Majd] There are reports that the deportees issue is on the way to being resolved before the next round of talks. Do you have any details about this?

[Ashrawi] We have not seen any practical signs of a solution. We reached an agreement with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher on the six points discussed to tackle the core of the deportation issue. The points emphasized the illegality of deportation and the need to compel Israel not to resort to such a measure; called for speeding up the deportees' return in compliance with Resolution 799 and to allow those deported since 1967 to return; and urged practical steps on human rights issues and [words indistinct] relating to points of reference in the negotiation process. These six points were supposed to be points of agreement to solve the issue in a radical way so that we could remove the obstacles that Israel placed before the negotiation process. But these points have not been implemented.

[Abu-al-Majd] Who is responsible for their nonimplementation? Do you believe the United States shares this responsibility?

[Ashrawi] Responsibility lies primarily with the Israeli side. The United States believed or was convinced that Israel agrees and will implement these points, but we have seen no implementation, which means there could be a problem between Israel and the United States. If there is an Israeli attempt to distort, deny, or retract, this should be tackled by the United States. The Palestinian side should not be involved in this issue, because we believe we have concluded an agreement with the United States on these issues.

[Abu-al-Majd] Dr. 'Ashrawi, if the deportees issue is not resolved as the Arabs want, will you go to the negotiating table in April?

[Ashrawi] There are many obstacles before the negotiations. The first problem is the deportees issue and the principle of deportation. There are also the issues of human rights and of respect for the negotiations' points of reference. All these are part of [words indistinct]. We cannot make a decision when we know obstacles remain. Even if we return to the negotiations and the deportees are returned, Israel will put up other obstacles as it always does. Issues must be tackled radically, boldly, and completely and we must discuss the essence of the obstacles and the reasons Israel impedes any progress so that we can return to negotiations that move along the right course.

[Abu-al-Majd] Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, what will the Palestinian delegation do until April and the meeting of the cordon states ministers and until a ray of hope is seen in the deportees issue?

[Ashrawi] We need a united Arab stance, one of solidarity that backs the Palestinian issue and positions, because these obstacles are not limited to the Palestinian course; they face the whole negotiation process. We work on the basis that there is a united Arab stance, that the solution must be a comprehensive one, and that Israel must take steps and be compelled to comply with them to resume the negotiation process. We work persistently to remove these obstacles and are also preparing the necessary negotiation plans so that the talks will be fruitful and real, based on justice and right.

Delegation Head on Conditions for Talks Attendance

LD0803221993 *Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1900 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, the head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations, said that the Palestinians were ready to participate in the ninth round of negotiations if understanding was reached with regard to the return of all the deportees to their homes in one or more batches before next June. Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi pointed out in statements, published today by the Saudi London-based magazine, AL WASAT, that Warren Christopher said during his meeting with the Palestinian delegation in his latest visit to the region that Israel did not mind announcing its readiness not to resort again to

the deportation method except in exceptional cases. The delegation opposed this condition because Israel will not fail to find excuses. He also disclosed that the U.S. secretary of state warned the delegation that if negotiations did not resume soon, the peace process would die and things would revert to their previous state. He pointed out that there were many crises other than the Palestinian issue which needed a solution.

Brother Sa'ib 'Urayqat, member of the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations, on his part said that the Palestinian side had sent a memorandum on 22 March to the U.S. secretary of state, Warren Christopher, in which it demanded that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin refrain from the policy of both individual and collective deportations of Palestinians in the future.

'Urayqat said in a statement to the media that the memorandum of the Palestinian delegation's Guidance Committee Chairman, Faysal al-Husayni, to the U.S. secretary of state emphasized the principle of the illegitimacy of the deportations and said that, together with the deportees' repatriation and numbers, that principle formed the basis of Resolution 799 and was one of the six points.

The memorandum also called on Israel to (re)review the peace process as based on Resolution 242, which includes all the occupied territories, Jerusalem included.

The memorandum raised the topic of human rights in the occupied territories and called on the United States to take action to make the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 applicable to the Palestinians.

'Urayqat stressed that there had been continuous contact between the Palestinians and the Americans, even before Warren Christopher's arrival in the region, either through correspondence between the two sides or through meetings with the U.S. Consul in Jerusalem.

Hamas, Islamic Jihad Asked To Be 'Responsible'

TA0903141893 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 9 Mar 93
p 1

[Text] Gaza—Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi has called on followers of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad to behave in a responsible way and contain the infighting that broke out yesterday morning at Salah al-Din mosque in Gaza. 'Abd-al-Shafi added that national unity by all factions and tendencies are the strongest weapon for resisting the occupation and that every instance of infighting serves the occupation. The clash between the two sides' followers erupted after yesterday's morning prayers. Ten residents were injured during the clash, two of whom received moderate wounds and were transferred to hospital, while the rest were treated at local clinics.

Yesterday's clash was the first since the recent deportation operation. It is worth noting that the dispute stems

from each side's wish to control Salah al-Din mosque, one of the biggest mosques in the Gaza Strip.

'Arafat Speech on Intifadah Anniversary

LD0803233593 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic
1900 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Brother leader president Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] addressed the masses of our Palestinian people on the occasion of the 64th month anniversary of the intifadah. The brother leader said, among other things: You are now matching stubborn steadfastness with valiant resistance. The most savage and fascist policies of repression smash against the rocks of persistence and firmness. [passage omitted]

Brother leader Abu-'Ammar added: During the U.S. secretary of state's latest tour in the region, we hoped that the tour would lead to removing the Israeli-fabricated obstacles which stood in the way of resuming and guaranteeing the success of the peace process. The U.S. secretary listened to details of our stand which, while it stressed commitment to the peace process, determined the requirements for its resumption. Foremost among these is compliance with and implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 799 which aims to repatriate our deported brothers, to secure definitive abandonment of the deportation policy in the future, to respect human rights and international protection in the occupied territories, and to emphasize the basic concepts relating to the legitimacy of the peace process and to the capital of our independent state, honorable Jerusalem, the first of the two kiblahs and the third holy place, scene of the Prophet Mohammad's flight, and birthplace of the Messiah.

The brother president said: We considered that the six points which our delegation discussed with Secretary of State Christopher, who asked us to approve them, constituted a gateway to and a parameter for the extent of commitment to respect for the resolutions of international legitimacy. However, the Israeli stand confirmed anew its aggressive premises which rejected and defied international legitimacy and the will of the international community. In this respect, we are entitled to ask if international legitimacy has two standards, one which works against our people and nation, and another in favor of Israel, or one and the same standard which applies to all.

Brother president Abu-'Ammar said in his monthly address: While we re-emphasize our stand toward the resumption of the peace negotiations and stress the need to respect international legitimacy and its resolutions, we derive strength not only from our logical stand, which is compatible with the objectives of the peace process and its legitimacy, or from the central position of our cause, which is impossible to overlook or ignore. The main source of strength in our stand, as is unanimously acknowledged, is our valiant and blessed intifadah, the torch of which is burning bright and which relies on the unity of our people whose segments and sectors are all

fully and unanimously engaged in the struggle and in comprehensive confrontation. [passage omitted]

We will bring you the text of the address delivered by the brother leader president on the 64th month anniversary of the intifadah in tomorrow's program.

'Arafat Receives British Ambassador to Tunisia

LD0503200593 *Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1900 GMT 5 Mar 93

[Text] Brother leader president Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] this afternoon received Mr. Michael Tate, the British ambassador to Tunisia, in the presence of Brother Abu-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi], head of the PLO's political department.

During the meeting, the two men reviewed the political developments in the region, the efforts made to push the peace process forward, Israel's continuous [human rights] violations, and Israel's terrorist practices in the Gaza Strip.

Holds Talks With French Envoy

LD0803195493 *Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1900 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] The brother President Abu 'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] received today his excellency the French ambassador to Tunisia. Various current developments in the Middle East region—particularly the peace process and the Israeli obstacles to its resumption and the importance of European influence and its effective role upon the resumption of the peace process—were reviewed during the meeting. The talks also reviewed the American-Israeli reversal of position and violations of human rights. Conditions conducive to providing an impetus to the peace process were also studied.

PLO Official on Refusal To Attend Talks

NC0903104193 *Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic* 1000 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] Shafiq al-Hut, head of the PLO office in Lebanon, has said that the majority participating in the PLO Executive Committee's meetings in Tunis refuse to take part in the next round of negotiations due to be held in Washington in April.

In a press statement, al-Hut noted that ongoing contacts with the concerned Arab countries aim to adopt a unified stance during the cordon states' meeting in Damascus early next week. Al-Hut said he regretted the media campaign between the Palestinian deportees and the PLO, noting that the deportees are not the first c. to be deported.

Qaddumi on U.S. Support for Israel, Peace

NC0603120593 *Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic*
0610 GMT 6 Mar 93

[Telephone interview with Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, in Tunis, by Ashraf 'Abd-al-'Aziz, in Cairo, carried on the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] ['Abd-al-'Aziz] Mr. Faruq Qaddumi: Welcome on the airwaves of Voice of the Arabs.

[Qaddumi] Thank you.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] Mr. Qaddumi, while we hold this interview, Israel is carrying out the largest detention operation against the sons of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. It does so in a defiant manner, violating human rights and other international laws. What are the Palestinian moves or stand regarding what is happening now, especially in the occupied Gaza Strip?

[Qaddumi] The Palestinian people know full well that their continuing struggle is the only way to liberate the homeland. We are in constant contact with all international circles to stress the fact that Israel does not want peace, but that it is placing greater obstacles in the way of the peace march. It has so far not presented to help this march. What it wants is a deficient autonomy [hukm dhati manqus]. It does not want to discuss Jerusalem.

It carried out the deportations, which we consider to be a mass deportation; that is, a transfer [preceding word in English] of the Palestinian people. We present all of this before world public opinion so that it can impose sanctions on Israel, the hotbed of tension and obstructor of peace.

['Abd-al-'Aziz] This escalation by Israel and the Israeli occupation authorities is significant in a number of ways. Can you clarify some of these for us?

[Qaddumi] The first is that Israel does not want a just and permanent peace in the region. In fact, the opposite is true. It places obstacles before the peace march, especially at this stage, the beginning of a new stage for the U.S. Administration. It is believed that this administration will be sympathetic toward Israel. The Israeli Government is taking this opportunity to test the U.S. Administration. In addition, it wishes to quell the intifadah. Rabin is well known for his iron fist policy. However, the Israelis know very well that the intifadah will increase in vigor and force because it is the Palestinian people's definite reaction and legitimate right to resist occupation, one of the worst manifestations of terrorism.

In addition, its actions do not help the countries calling for world peace, especially after they believed Rabin would present regional concessions. We told them Rabin does not like peace and is known for his iron fist policy. This is proof enough for Europe and the United States, who are incorrectly supporting this knight for peace's

sake, that they should impose economic sanctions on Israel. Without European or U.S. support, Israel cannot continue to exist.

[Abd-al-'Aziz] It is well known that the Arab sides, especially the Palestinian side, cling to the peace process. The Arab countries concerned with the peace process will meet. What will the Palestinians propose at this meeting?

[Qaddumi] First of all, we called for an urgent meeting within one week. I repeated this to the Arab foreign ministers: We need to carry out a basic evaluation of this stage before 'Id al-Fitr [around 22 March] and we can meet after that. However, we should not wait until the date for the peace talks is set. We need to meet before the talks because we have a problem: the brother deportees.

In addition, there is a basic point here, which is that the eighth round of talks was a failure because Israel is trying to stall and not to present anything during the talks. It rejects Resolution 242, which is the basic pillar for a political settlement. It steps up its terrorist practices, although the agreement from the very beginning was that it carry out confidence-building measures. Unfortunately, everything that has happened is contrary to what Mr. Baker told us. Nevertheless, we insist on this peace march for one reason: It is a political struggle for us to gain the world's support. These talks might fail in the end; however, as long as the world peace march continues, following all the upheavals we have witnessed in many countries, this struggle turns into a political war. We wage this political war so that we can isolate Israel and cut off all its economic and political ties. This is what the talks mean to us. They are a continuing political struggle, because the world is on our side. In addition, there is international legitimacy, which we all rely on as a basis for this settlement.

[Abd-al-'Aziz] Has a date for this urgent meeting you asked for been set?

[Qaddumi] We sent messages to our brothers in the cordon states and we are waiting for their response. In fact, we received positive responses, and we are now waiting to set the date for this meeting.

[Abd-al-'Aziz] While we are with you on this open line between Cairo and Tunis, we would like to ask you the following: Belgium has raised the status of the PLO mission in Brussels. The PLO now has an official delegation there rather than an information and contact bureau. This Belgian step has many ramifications at this point in time. Can you tell us about some of them?

[Qaddumi] Most of the Palestinian stands, behavior, and action have begun to convince many reluctant European countries that the PLO is now practically and officially a basic and constructive partner in the peace process, especially after these Israeli acts, which have been condemned by the Europeans. All this behavior and the policy we follow, as well as these oppressive Israeli measures, prove that the PLO is a constructive element

in a constructive peace. In reality, this makes the European countries deal with us not only as a reality, but in an official manner. This also makes these countries recognize the PLO as a basic partner, not only a partner that has a mere share in this process. What Belgium has done is clear proof of this policy.

[Abd-al-'Aziz] Thank you.

[Qaddumi] Thank you.

Praises Syria, al-Asad Leadership

JN0803202793 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1915 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Rome—Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, has affirmed that Syria is playing a pioneering role in the region, particularly at this point in time; that is, in the aftermath of the cold war, which requires flexibility, political wisdom, firmness, adherence to constant principles, patience, and persistence. These traits mark the conduct of His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, he added.

In a statement to a correspondent of the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY in Rome during a stopover at Rome airport, Qaddumi went on to say: For many long years, President Hafiz al-Asad has been leading Syria under delicate and complicated circumstances. This has immensely influenced the course of events in the Middle East, particularly with regard to the Palestine question, which is a top priority in Syria. Syria cannot feel at ease as long as the Palestine question experiences difficulty and hardship. He reiterated that Syria is a center of enlightenment that enormously influences the future of the region as well as the future of the Arab nation as a whole.

'Urayqat: Financial Pressure Exerted on PLO

TA0903145193 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 9 Mar 93 pp 1, 7

[By Nasir Najib]

[Excerpt] Jerusalem—Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, deputy head of the Palestinian negotiating delegation, has disclosed that some Arab states are exerting financial pressure on the PLO by freezing enormous assets worth about \$221 million.

'Urayqat said various Palestinian sectors in the occupied territories are suffering a financial crisis because approximately \$47 million has been frozen by the United Arab Emirates. The Palestinian side has asked several Arab and international parties to intercede for the release of these assets so that they can be used to aid the Palestinian people inside the occupied territories. [passage omitted]

'Source' Denies Report on Meeting Postponement

LD0803203093 *Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1900 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] A responsible information source has issued the following statement:

A responsible Palestinian source has denied today's report by the newspaper AL BAYAN, which is based in the United Arab Emirates, that the PLO has asked for a postponement of the ring countries' [countries bordering with Israel] foreign ministers' meeting. The source said this news item is devoid of truth and that a Palestinian delegation led by brother Abu-Lutf [Farruq Qaddumi] will leave today for Damascus and Amman for talks about the early convocation of such a meeting. Another delegation, led by brother Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], will go to Cairo for the same purpose.

Officials on Peace Talks, Cordon States Meeting

JN0903113693 *Amman AL-RAY in Arabic* 9 Mar 93
p 1

[By 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[Excerpts] Faysal al-Husayni, head of the Advisory Council to the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, has said that the resumption of Palestinian-U.S. talks in Washington is under discussion.

In a statement to AL-RAY in Amman while on his way from occupied Palestine to London, al-Husayni said that no date had been set, as yet, for these talks.

Al-Husayni emphasized the need to link the deportee issue to the resumption of the negotiations. He said: The deportee issue should be resolved before the forthcoming negotiations are resumed in Washington. [passage omitted]

On the other hand, [PLO Executive Committee Member] 'Abd-al-Rahim Malluh has stated that the date of the conference of the foreign ministers of the cordon states—Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, and Palestine, in addition to Egypt, scheduled to be held after Christopher's tour of the region, will be set only after the U.S. Administration sets a date for the ninth session of negotiations in Washington.

Malluh added that some parties are delaying the conference awaiting the results of the U.S. contacts with all sides for setting the date of the next session of peace talks in Washington.

Malluh affirmed that such a stand harms the unity of Arab ranks and the joint Arab coordination, which should not be based on the results of the U.S. contacts and policy but on the need to protect Arab and Palestinian interests and rights. [passage omitted]

Israeli Withdrawal From Territories 'Inevitable'

T60503154193 *Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic* 4 Mar 93
pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "The Gaza Blockade and the Inevitable Israeli Withdrawal"]

[Text] It was no accident for Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to use the term "blockade" of the Gaza Strip and then back down and say that it was merely a few days "closure."

The outcome is, in fact, a blockade of the entire Gaza Strip through collective punishment of some one million Palestinian residents—something that is being repeated by the Israeli Government under the pretext of the escalation of violent acts.

Clearly, all international laws, charters, agreements, and norms do not sanction this punishment and consider it to be against international legitimacy, but the Israeli Government does not pay heed to this clear, legitimate stance. In addition, it does not care about the repercussions from the blockade, particularly the negative effects on the peace process and on all the efforts being exerted to remove the obstacles to the resumption of bilateral negotiations and the expected ninth round.

In light of the daily events in the Gaza Strip, many Israeli officials are reiterating their statements and views on the need for a speedy Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, whereas Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin is opposed to this.

So, what does Israel want? And what does its prime minister want? No one is tying Israel's hands about this withdrawal, which is necessary both from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338. Why doesn't Israel withdraw upon the arrival of international forces or observers to supervise the period between its withdrawal and the creation of a Palestinian national authority?

Withdrawal is inevitable, sooner or later. Rabin's government, or Rabin himself, are persisting in ignoring this, which will lead to further suffering, disasters, and tragedies.

Officials React to Possible Israeli Gaza Pullout

PM0503124193 *London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic* 4 Mar 93 pp 1, 4

[Ali al-Salih report: "PLO Does Not Rule Out Sudden Israeli Withdrawal From Gaza"]

[Excerpts] London—In a poll conducted by AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Palestinian leaders do not rule out the possibility of Israel's embarking on withdrawing from the Gaza Strip unilaterally. Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi [chief delegate to the peace talks] described such a step as a catastrophe. The leaders pointed to the existence of an

unintegrated plan or views which have not yet crystallized to tackle such an unexpected situation. [passage omitted]

The question being asked is: Can Israel really embark on a sudden withdrawal? And do Palestinian leaders believe it could happen? And if so, is there a carefully studied plan to tackle such an unexpected situation?

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT put these questions to three Palestinian officials representing various strands of the political map. Two of them confirmed that this belief exists. They also pointed to the existence of "something like a plan or views which have not yet crystallized." As for the third official, he ruled out the idea completely, pointing out that Israel cannot embark on a withdrawal without a heavy price being paid on the occupied West Bank. [passage omitted]

A PLO official who asked to remain anonymous confirms the possibility of Israel's embarking on a withdrawal and says that Palestinian circles are taking this into consideration. If it happens, "we have a plan—though not detailed—to tackle such an unexpected situation and bring it under control gradually in coordination with the Egyptian side." He went on to say: "There are arrangements to control matters, and we will not face many problems." But he did not reveal these arrangements.

Asked whether there was any coordination with other Palestinian parties, specifically Hamas, the Palestinian source said: "There are no arrangements with any other party. The PLO has a plan, even though it is not integrated." Muhammad Nazzal, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] representative in Jordan, emphasized the Israeli withdrawal possibility; as he said, "in this case we urge the United Nations to hold elections in the Strip to elect a leadership to assume power there. And we believe that the opportunity will be favorable to proclaim a Palestinian state on that spot of Palestinian territory."

On the conflicts that could emerge, he said: "Hamas will invite all the Palestinian forces inside to an expanded meeting to arrange for general elections for the Palestinians in the Strip. No single quarter can monopolize the task of running the Strip. Hamas has its masses and supporters and thus cannot be transcended in such a case."

Nazzal confirmed the existence of views which have not yet become a comprehensive plan to tackle such an unexpected situation.

Meanwhile, Bashir Barghuthi, secretary general of the Palestinian People's Party in the occupied territories, has ruled out the possibility of an unconditional Israeli withdrawal from the Strip. He said: "In fact that assumption is improbable and not on the cards. If this probability becomes a possibility, the Strip will be returned to Egypt, not the PLO, except in the one option of trading the Strip for big concessions in the West Bank." He went

on: "The hint at withdrawal from Gaza without linking this to a withdrawal from the rest of the occupied West Bank and Jerusalem means also a demand for an acknowledgment that the other parts are Israel's. It is a kind of a concealed partition of the occupied territories." [passage omitted]

Hamas Official on Western Contacts, NY Explosion

JN0803095593 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 8 Mar 93 p 25

[By 'Awdah 'Awdah]

[Text] The Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, has revealed that political contacts were recently held between a Hamas delegation and Spanish and Chinese diplomats in the Sudanese capital, at the request of the diplomats.

In a statement to AL-RA'Y, Muhammad Nazzal, Hamas Representative in Jordan, said the Spanish diplomat was tasked by the Spanish Foreign Ministry to contact Hamas and hold a dialogue with it.

Nazzal added: As for the contacts with the Chinese diplomats, these were held at the level of the Chinese ambassador in Khartoum. He added that the Chinese Embassy in Amman had agreed to a meeting with our movement but not at the ambassador's level, which we rejected.

Nazzal affirmed that the Hamas Movement continues to hold dialogue with all the Western parties to explain its stands as a Palestinian national movement. He said the ball is now in the Western countries' court. He also said he hopes the Western countries' stands will not be affected by the new U.S. stand of suspending contacts with Hamas.

Regarding the explosion at the World Trade Center in New York, Nazzal accused the Israeli Mosad. He added: This is in light of the reports leaked about the relationship between Muhammad Salamah and an Israeli man called Uzi Hadas [name as published]. He said that the U.S. State Department from an objective and legal point of view cannot place Hamas on the international terrorism list because, as we understand it, the U.S. law places on this list only countries and organizations which attack U.S. interests, and Hamas has not carried out any operation against U.S. interests inside or outside the occupied Palestinian territory.

Nazzal did not rule out the possibility that the Zionist lobby in the United States would try to change or amend these U.S. laws to have them conform to the trend seeking to condemn Hamas and classify it as a terrorist organization.

The Hamas official affirmed that Hamas will not pay any attention to any classification it may be given and will

pursue its jihad and struggle with all legitimate means against the occupation because it defends a just cause.

Muhammad Nazzal said he cannot understand the double standards and selectivity employed by the U.S. Administration to classify terrorist organizations. He said: For example, the U.S. Administration does not treat the Irish Republican Army as a terrorist organization in spite of the fact that it has carried out operations against British interests.

Nazzal added: With regard to countries, while the U.S. Administration seeks to list Hamas as a terrorist organization, it ignores the state terrorism carried out by the occupation forces through their killing of Palestinian civilians, as well as the terrorist operations outside the occupied territories such as those in Lebanon, Tunisia, and other countries.

On the latest stand on the deportees' issue, Nazzal said that his movement calls for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 799, which stipulates the immediate return of all the deportees. He denied that Hamas has changed its stand, rebutting reports about a four-point secret agreement between Hamas and Stuart Brown, counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Amman, affirming that some Palestinian quarters disseminate these rumors to pave the way for their attending the forthcoming peace negotiations in Washington.

Editorial Views U.S.-Hamas 'Contacts'

TA0803145793 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 5 Mar 93
pp 1, 11

[Editorial: "The Dialogue With the United States!"]

[Text] The residents would not have learned about U.S. contacts with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] had not Washington announced a few days ago that it had stopped those contacts. Thus, the United States looms as the instigator of an odd attempt to undermine Palestinian national unity and exploit some organizational problems in the Palestinian national movement in general to harm this movement and mobilize it for its own aims and schemes in the region.

The United States, of course, had established an official dialogue with the PLO through Hakam Bal'awi, the Palestinian ambassador in Tunis, and his U.S. counterpart at that time, Robert Pelletreau. After the dialogue had gone on for 18 months without going beyond the ambassadorial level, Washington itself broke or suspended this dialogue under the pretext of a Palestinian military operation inside Israel.

Although on many occasions, PLO officials have persistently appealed to and called on the United States to resume that severed or suspended dialogue out of concern for continuing the peace process through the PLO, sole legitimate representative of our Palestinian people,

U.S. Administration officials have in return closed their ears to this demand and continue to rule out the resumption of this dialogue.

Therefore, it was baffling to "discover" the existence of contacts and dialogue between the United States and Hamas at this time when the United States is refusing to resume contact or dialogue with the PLO.

Washington's aim from this is clear. It is to splinter the Palestinian ranks and "strike" at the PLO with Hamas through the "enticement" of a dialogue with the White House at this difficult stage!

This, however, is an exposed and totally impractical aim, because the unified Palestinian will, despite disagreements, is able to foil attempts to splinter and dissipate these efforts, and can protect our national rights on the road to peace, justice, and righteousness.

Anti-Muslim 'Campaign' in U.S. Examined

LD0703223793 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic
1900 GMT 7 Mar 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Brothers, first of all, as Arab Muslims we condemn the killing of innocent people and indiscriminate violence anywhere in the world and we affirm that this kind of action is contrary to the traditional Arab spirit and in contradiction to the magnanimous Islamic teachings that prohibit the killing of a soul, which God has forbidden unless it is rightful.

It is therefore regrettable that this magnanimous Arab and Islamic concept should be subjected to a deliberate distortion, initiated by certain parties which have been busy exploiting internal events in many Arab countries to harm Arabs and Islam generally and indiscriminately. It is as if these biased parties are proceeding in accordance with planned steps to push matters to the edge of confrontation between Arabs and Muslims on one side and the whole world on the other.

For example, the explosion which took place in New York a few days ago has been exploited by these parties to carry out a wide-scale stirring campaign against the Arab and Islamic community in the United States. Keep in mind that the person who has been arrested is still in the stage of being questioned and has not yet been officially charged.

We stress our trust in the U.S. justice system, which is built on judicial proceedings based on the principle of the accused being innocent until proved guilty. On the basis of that, we reject the prejudgement of any person prior to having stood a fair trial. More importantly, is the exploitation of the arrest of that person on the basis of being under suspicion a means to a wide-ranging racist and religious propaganda campaign? That exploitation is incompatible with the cultural, humanitarian, and legal

values of a country that is seen as being more progressive, civilized, and humanitarian.

Any incident, whatever the inner and psychological chain reactions, must not drive the society in which it has occurred to the kind of behavior that exceeds limits and goes beyond the framework of prudence and objectivity. We hope that the biased campaign that is currently taking place in the United States is merely a passing storm and that calm, contemplation, and reflection will prevail in the aftermath of events, away from volatile and riotous reaction, a surrender to which, as indicated by historical facts, has led to the most dire consequences.

DFLP Leader on U.S. Policy, Other Issues

NC0803115593 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian
16 Feb 93 p 12

["Exclusive" interview with Nayif Hawatimah, leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, DFLP, by an unidentified ETTELA'AT correspondent; place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [ETTELA'AT] Many years have passed since the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine was formed. What is your assessment of the front's activities, and at this point have you achieved your declared objectives?

[Hawatimah] We celebrate the DFLP's 24th anniversary on 22 February. Our national popular and armed movement is entering its 25th year. During the course of these years, the history of Palestine and the DFLP has been marked with the bodies of martyrs and a river of the martyrs' blood which joins our hearts and sentiments.

The DFLP has made certain gains on the path toward liberating Palestine. We have worked to crystallize our Palestinian national identity and help Palestine return to the political, geographical, and jihad map of the Middle East. [passage omitted]

We witnessed in 1974 that the special resolutions passed by Islamic and Arab countries, the Nonaligned Movement member countries, the Third World, the United Nations, and the Security Council stressed the rights of the Palestinians; our people's right to decide their destiny, their independence, and their right to return to their homeland. This is a great historical gain and it is for this reason that we say today that no Islamic or Arab government—in fact, no government in the world—can afford to ignore the Palestinian issue and the rights of the Palestinian people. The current war is based on the guarantee for these very rights. [passage omitted]

The intifadah, our dear movement, has entered its sixth year and continues in occupied Palestine. The entire world is witness to the fact that the intifadah is the movement of the Palestinian youth. Today the Palestinian movement has entered every house in the world.

Those who throw stones, Molotov cocktails, knives, and now, five years later, use firearms, continue their resistance against the usurpation of the aggressor Zionist Israel in order to regain the rights of the nation, their independence, freedom, and the right to decide their destiny.

This is another great gain our people have made, and we stress that the ceaseless struggle against the Zionist enemy has entailed much financial, economic, and military hardship, but what is most important is that it has exposed the repulsive brutal visage of the enemy to the entire world.

All these are the gains our nation has achieved. The DFLP has played a major and effective role in the popular movements. In addition, the DFLP also supports all the movements through which the nations in the Arab and Islamic countries are striving for their just rights.

It was on the basis of this stance that the DFLP condemned the Iraqi forces' aggression against Iran and took a stance supporting Iran. This is because we feel the Islamic revolution supports our nation and the Palestinian issue. [passage omitted]

I can say confidently and with a clear conscience that the DFLP has a major role in the 10-member coalition of Palestinian groups, which are comprised of Islamic, national, and democratic forces. They all are jihad forces struggling for the freedom and independence of Palestine.

I wish to add that we are opposed to the U.S.-Zionist plan and to the expansionist bureaucracy ruling over Palestine and the bureaucracy prevailing in Arab countries, especially in Egypt, which seeks to impose the Madrid-Washington peace plan on the Palestinian nation. This struggle continues within the framework of the 10-member coalition. [passage omitted]

[ETTELA'AT] On what basis does the 10-member coalition cooperate?

[Hawatimah] First, this 10-member group has a common aim—that is, the proliferation of the intifadah, resistance against the usurper Zionists until the liberation of Palestine, halting the Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, and halting the expulsion of Palestinians and their repression. Second, a campaign and efforts to suspend the Washington talks and the bilateral and multilateral talks.

Third, the immediate withdrawal from these talks and rejection of the autonomy committees, which the Americans announced in Madrid and which were to be held between the Zionist Israelis and the PLO's rightist groups under U.S. supervision.

Fourth, joint operations to halt the construction of Jewish settlements and the emigration of Jews into Palestine and the Arab and Islamic countries—where 4

million Palestinian refugees are residing—with emphasis on allowing them to return to their homeland.

These are the common points of the 10-member coalition and should enable us to attain our objectives. To do this we should muster all our resources and attract the assistance of Arab and Islamic countries and all those in the world who believe in our struggle against tyranny and oppression. [passage omitted]

[ETTELA'AT] There is talk that the Gaza Strip may be returned to the Palestinians. In your opinion, is this possible?

[Hawatimah] This is a maneuver by Rabin, who wants to create a rift between the Palestinians of the Gaza Strip and of Jerusalem. You know that the Gaza Strip is only 325 square km and that 850,000 people live there. This is the greatest number of people per kilometer in the entire world.

The Gaza Strip is a important base for the Palestinian revolution, and this is why the Zionists wish to get rid of it. They have been trying to segregate that part of the Gaza Strip, in which they have constructed settlements since the time of [late Egyptian President Anwar] al-Sadat, but the Egyptian Government did not wish to take responsibility for anything having to do with the Palestinian nation.

Today the Zionist Israeli Government wishes to create differences among the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and Jerusalem. We demand Israel withdraw from all Palestinian territories, and we will not permit it to drive a wedge or sow sedition within the Palestinian nation. The Zionist Israeli Government wishes to spread these differences internally and externally so it can make gains in the peace talks. Now it is trying to create discord among the Palestinians by saying that it will withdraw from the Gaza Strip. This is merely a tactic to generate differences within the Palestinian nation.

[ETTELA'AT] In your opinion, what is the U.S. policy on the future of the Middle East?

[Hawatimah] The U.S. policy in the region is to create a crescent of crisis from Afghanistan to Morocco so that the United States can gain control over oil, other resources, and production centers. It also wishes to control the oil resources in Central Asia and in the Persian Gulf and the oil route up to the Mediterranean Sea. The United States imports 50 percent of the oil it uses for industrial, technological, military, and other purposes from this region.

The United States bases its policy on its interests in the Third World, particularly the oil-rich Arab and Islamic countries, as I mentioned earlier. It is for this reason that the United States wishes to maintain absolute control over this region and over this crescent from Afghanistan to Morocco.

We do not believe there will be the slightest change in U.S. policy under Clinton. U.S. imperialism has certain

interests and does not believe in "friends," but in "interests." The United States does not adhere to any laws or principles where its interests are concerned. Washington dictates policies, and it is well known that U.S. policies do not change under various presidents regarding other nations, Palestine, the Arab and Islamic countries, and the Third World in particular.

[ETTELA'AT] In your opinion, why do the United States, the West, and the United Nations follow a policy of double-standards regarding the Palestine issue and all other issues?

[Hawatimah] Just as I mentioned earlier, the United States and all imperialist governments have interests. In Palestine the Zionist government is playing the role of a gendarme and its interests are supported by the governments of the powers of world arrogance. Israel had a greater role regarding the Arab and Islamic countries when the former Soviet Union was more involved in the region. Israel at present has signed numerous strategic agreements with the United States to defend U.S. and Israeli interests in the region, the benefits of which both enjoy.

You know full well that the Arab and Islamic nations wish to be free and liberate themselves from the subervient governments, from the dictatorial governments that are the enemies of the people. This is why the United States supports Israel; so it can crush the Arab and Israeli nations.

This is why the United States has double standards and two-faced policies: One is for the Arab, Islamic, and Third World countries, and the other for the Zionist enemy. For example all the resolutions adopted by the Security Council that have become international law have been completely disregarded by the Zionist enemy, and the United States always categorically vetoes any action against Israel or threatens to use its veto. Another example is Resolution 799, which demands Israel return the Palestinian deportees to their homes immediately. Israel has rejected it on the one hand, and the United States on the other has rejected any action by the Security Council against Israel. The actions demanded against Israel, embodied in the resolution, are in accordance with UN Charter Articles 39 and 41.

The U.S. Administration is using all its might and resources to block armament and weapons of mass destruction and to oppose other nations if U.S. and imperialist interests are threatened. Thus we see that the United States has two different standards: One for the Zionist enemy and one for all the others. [passage omitted]

[ETTELA'AT] What, in your opinion, is the U.S. objective with regard to its moves in Africa and the Persian Gulf, especially in Somalia and Iraq?

[Hawatimah] The U.S. attack on Somalia was an attempt to gain full control over the Red Sea. This is a sequel to

its policy of trying to gain control over Persian Gulf oil and its route. This is the same reason why it wishes to dominate Somalia.

Second, the U.S. imperialists wish to be in a position to crush Sudan. They will be able to create an inroad, especially in southern Sudan, by way of Somalia after creating some internal problems there. This will pave the way for the proliferation of armed operations in southern Sudan so that the country will be besieged between the north and the south. From this point of view, we can see why the Egyptian Government has stepped up its political and propaganda attacks against Sudan and is stirring up border disputes such as the Hala'ib issue, which is in accordance with the plan for the Horn of Africa and Sudan [not further explained].

Regarding Iraq, I should state that the United States is not only the enemy of Saddam, but wishes to suppress Arab and Islamic nations to the extent that they would not even be able to raise their heads against the colonial powers and stand up against them. [passage omitted]

[ETTELA'AT] In your opinion, what has the intifadah gained in the past five years compared with what the Palestinian groups have achieved in their struggle over the past few decades?

[Hawatimah] The intifadah is a prominent and noble link in the chain of struggle marking the Palestinian revolution's contemporary history. It has not occurred as a coincidence or without any preceding conditions. The Palestinian revolution was an armed popular struggle that took place in Palestine and abroad, especially in the camps of Lebanon, Syria, and Jordan over the past 20 years. Our nation was organized inside the occupied areas so that our people could resist and be steadfast against the occupation of their homeland; so that they could eliminate the plots of the usurpers, who want to drive our people out of their homeland and exile them collectively. Of course, this catastrophe did not recur due to the resistance. [passage omitted]

The intifadah, on the other hand, projected the issue of Palestine as a humanitarian problem, calling for justice, on an international scale and in every home. The people of the world saw on television how young boys and girls, and men and women, stood up to the enemy only with cries, stones, and knives, while the enemy had the latest and most sophisticated weaponry. [passage omitted]

[ETTELA'AT] In your opinion, why were more than 400 Islamist Palestinians expelled? I emphasize Islamist.

[Hawatimah] This deportation of our mujahid brothers of Islamic Jihad and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] is an action, a program devised by Rabin's Zionist government, and is a warning for all the Palestinian forces who took a stance against the peace talks that this is how they will be treated. It was for this purpose that the enemy government's president announced that this is a step toward uprooting the groups opposed to the bilateral and multilateral talks.

You are well aware that the enemy had another program for the exile of 55 other freedom fighters, but the plan was foiled right at the outset and the exile was stalled. With such programs, the enemy wishes to drive a wedge between the intifadah and its leaders; that is, those who said no to the bilateral and multilateral talks and have resisted the conditions laid down by the United States and Israel. I may remind you that prior to the deportation of these people, the enemy deported 2,000 freedom fighters who were from among the progressive forces of the intifadah.

[ETTELA'AT] In your opinion, what role did the victory of the Islamic revolution play regarding the Palestinian issue and support for the Palestinian people's struggle? What Palestinian expectations regarding the Islamic revolution have not been fulfilled?

[Hawatimah] We in the DFLP always sided with the Iranian people in their opposition to the shah's dictatorship, the CENTO [Central Treaty Organization] pact, and the shah's relations with the Zionist enemy. We always have opposed the reactionary and subservient Arab and Islamic governments affiliated with imperialism, and we rejoiced at the victory of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which toppled the shah and adopted a correct stance. The Islamic revolution liberated Iran from a despotic, dictatorial government. [passage omitted]

We believe that the Islamic revolution is obligated to help oppressed nations. It should support all freedom-seeking forces, headed by the Palestinian nation, that are striving for independence. We officially believe that the Islamic Republic of Iran has a major responsibility with regard to the intifadah and should support it to keep it going in the occupied territories. It should provide all kinds of assistance which it can such as political, moral or material, and establish social and economic organizations which can bolster its existence and durability in the face of usurpation.

You know that there are 180,000 Palestinians working in Israeli companies. There are no Palestinian companies in the occupied areas in which the Palestinians can work. If they do not work in the Israeli companies, they have no source of income.

It therefore is a major obligation for us and for Iran to assist the people to set up social, economic, education, and training institutes for these people so they can earn a living. Therefore, they will be able to avoid the Israeli companies and to continue their resistance.

We also are obligated to help the intifadah-staging nation so it can continue its strikes and protests against the conditions created for it. This is because in the past five years of the intifadah, some have remained unemployed, which has resulted in famine and near-famine conditions in the West Bank. [passage omitted]

DFLP Reportedly Calls For Talks Withdrawal

JN0903120293 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic
9 Mar 93 pp 20, 16

[By Riyadh Mansur]

[Excerpt] Amman—The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP], led by Nayif Hawatimah, has stressed that during the PLO Executive Committee meetings, which were concluded in Tunis two days ago, the DFLP called for pulling out of the negotiations and opening the door for a comprehensive national dialogue so that agreement can be reached on the bases of Palestinian participation in the peace process based on international legitimacy.

Taysir Khalid, PLO Executive Committee member and DFLP representative in the committee, said: It is high time to adopt such a stand, especially since Christopher's tour has revealed the essence of the new U.S. policy which he tried to promote in the region and which he presented to the Arab negotiators, particularly the Palestinians.

In an exclusive statement to SAWT AL-SHA'B, he added: We should make Rabin's government and the new U.S. Administration understand that the terms of the current political process no longer suit the Palestinian people or fulfill the minimum of their demands and national legitimate rights. He added that the U.S. Administration and Rabin's government should respect the resolutions of international legitimacy and the Palestinian people's right to sit at the negotiating table as a unified delegation from within and outside the occupied territories. [passage omitted]

PFLP Official Urges 'Defiance' of U.S. Policies

PM0803174393 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 4 Mar 93 p 5

[Fathi al-Barqawi report: "Abu-'Ali Mustafa: We Should Confront U.S. Policy by Defiance, Not by Adapting to it"]

[Excerpts] Tunis, AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI—Palestinian leadership meetings began the day before yesterday under the chairmanship of President Yasir 'Arafat. They were attended by the PLO Executive Committee members.

Among the topics on the agenda was the assessment of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's recent tour of the Middle East region, especially the meeting between him and members of the Palestinian delegation held in Jerusalem. [passage omitted]

Commenting on Christopher's tour, [Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—PFLP—Assistant Secretary General] Abu-'Ali Mustafa, who has been in Tunis since last Sunday to participate in the Palestinian meetings, stressed the need to confront U.S. policy by defiance, not by adapting to it—a reference to Washington's bias toward Israel at the Palestinians' expense. He pointed out that the aim of the head of U.S. diplomacy in his

Middle East tour was to restore the Arab-Israeli negotiations to the mode that existed under the former U.S. Administration. [passage omitted]

Christopher's aim, according to the PFLP assistant secretary general, was also to secure reassuring answers from the Arab parties and their willingness to continue the peace process without obtaining guarantees which events of the previous eight rounds proved are necessary. He noted that the U.S. backtracking on its agreement to six Palestinian proposals explains the U.S. secretary's rush to announce a statement in which he and his Russian opposite number declared their intention to send invitations to hold a new round of negotiations—which proves that he secured from the Arab capitals concerned agreement and willingness to resume the negotiations.

The Palestinian leader describes the round's results as a failure. He pointed out that the Americans' support for Israel in its noncompliance with UN Security Council Resolution 799 enables Israel to interpret the other resolutions in the manner that serves its own interests—which weakens the United Nations.

Abu-'Ali Mustafa stressed that the Palestinians will not go to the negotiations unless a solution to the deportees issue is found and the other demands they submitted are met. [passage omitted]

He stressed the need to unite the Palestinian national position, especially 45 days before the ninth round—that is if the Palestinian demands are met—in order to work to build a more resolute position in the face of the U.S. pressures aimed at imposing its policy on the region.

Asked about Arab coordination, Abu-'Ali Mustafa did not conceal his feeling. He said: "It is not reassuring." He expressed his utmost regret for the weakness of the Arab position. He pointed out that the U.S. Administration worked through Christopher's contacts with Arab leaders to obtain individual answers in a bid to prepare the ground for inviting the parties to resume the negotiations without taking account of the Palestinian position, "which they wanted to submit to the Arab position." Abu-'Ali Mustafa wondered: Would it not have been more proper to hold a meeting for the Arab cordons states before the the U.S. secretary of state instead of holding it later? He described the meeting expected to be held in Damascus as formal, saying that it will not deal with the essence; in fact it could represent a means of pressure on the Palestinian side.

Concluding his interview with AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI, Abu-'Ali Mustafa stressed the need to strengthen the Palestinian position by working to return the deportees, as that would secure for the Palestinians a political achievement representing a penetration of the Zionist ideological wall on which U.S. policy is built. He expressed his belief that endorsing the Palestinians' return principle represents a blow to the Israeli strategic plan based on the idea that the Palestinians should remain defeated forever.

Algeria

HCE, Political Parties Consultations To Start 13 Mar

LD0903105293 Algiers APS in English 1014 GMT
9 Mar 93

[Text] Algiers, March 9 (APS)—The Higher State Committee (HCE) announced Monday that meetings with political parties and associations will start on Saturday March 13. The HCE pointed out that an agenda is proposed and has been transmitted to political parties and associations concerned.

This second series of discussions with the various political and social components will have a concrete dimension and the proposals that will be agreed on will have great chances to be really materialized, reliable sources said.

The President of the Higher State Committee, Ali Kafi, declared in his speech on January 14 that "the meetings with the political parties, the popular organizations and associations will continue during 1993 so as to redynamize the national political life". Discussions, the president of the HCE will center on fundamental problems and will enable each partner to precise its strategy in relation with the supreme interests of the nation.

The qualified institutions, the representatives of associations, political parties and social forces and personalities desiring to bring their contribution in the interest of the national cause, and in the respect of the republican spirit, will participate, according to the president of the HCE. At the opposite, those who practice, advocate or justify violence are excluded from any dialogue, the president of the HCE further said.

The axes of the working program included in the speech of the HCE president and the projects announced for the current year, will constitute the main subjects of discussion, it was learnt.

The president of the HCE, announced the holding of a referendum on the revision of the constitution, on the best formulae of management of the transitional period and judged as "imperative" to grant a "reasonable minimum delay" in order that the government program reaches its objectives.

The hierarchization of priorities fixed by the HCE which was aimed at the resumption of the electoral process was differently appreciated within the opposition. The difference between the approach of the HCE and that of some parties appear clearly in memorandums proposed by some parties to the HCE.

The first consultations between the HCE and representatives of parties and associations took place in September of last year. Five parties took part in these discussions: the FLN [National Liberation Front], Hamas [Islamic Society Movement], RCD [Rally for Culture and Democracy], FFS [Socialist Forces Front]

and Nahda [Islamic Renaissance Movement]. Moreover, a number of social partners took part in these consultations.

Party Leader Calls For Establishment of People's Power

LD0803094393 Tripoli JANA in English 0903 GMT
8 Mar 93

[Text] Algiers, Al Rabia [March] JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY—Dr. Ahmed Mohammed, the leader of the (Algerian Modern Muslim Party), called for handing power to people and the establishment of people's authority in Algeria as rational solution to the current crisis of the country.

In an interview published by the Algerian newspaper (Al JAZAIR AL YOUM), Ahmed stressed that the expected dialogue between the government and political tendencies should focus on the way to hand over power to the people hence get the country out of its crisis and that any other solutions will be useless...

Lieutenant, Three Civilians Reportedly Killed 6 Mar

LD0803094193 Paris Radio France International in French 0630 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Excerpts] In Algeria, a second lieutenant in the gendarmerie and three civilians were killed by unknown persons on Saturday night. [passage omitted] The toll of political violence in the last five days in Algeria is 23 people killed. The toll from the beginning of the year is 96 victims.

Egypt

Musa: Campaign Against Muslims in U.S. 'Unfair'

NC0903162393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1541 GMT
9 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 9 Mar (MENA)—Egypt today welcomed the agreement reached among the Afghan leaders to restore peace and amity to Afghanistan.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said Egypt welcomes whatever steps can end the Afghan civil war and begin the normalization of life in fraternal Afghanistan. We hope this agreement will contribute to restarting political and normal life as well as cooperation among the various factions of the fraternal Afghan people so that they can emerge from the serious crisis they have been experiencing for many years, Musa added.

In addition, Musa described the campaign to which Muslims and Arabs in the United States are being subjected as unfair and unjustified, saying that terrorism is not confined to the Islamic states; it is a worldwide phenomenon. Musa discussed the ethnic cleansing, beatings, and rapes the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina are

suffering through as well as what Asian Muslims are subjected to. This, he added, indicates that terrorism is not an Arab or Islamic brand, but exists in all religions and throughout most of the world.

The foreign minister mentioned Sudan, saying that earlier today Egypt's Ambassador in Khartoum Dr. Hasan Jad-al-Haq handed him a report on some aspects of relations between Egypt and Sudan. He said he hopes the Egyptian-Sudanese Joint Committee on Hala'ib will meet following 'Id al-Fitr [22-25 March].

'New World Terrorism,' Trade Center Blast Viewed

NC0803181693 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 6 Mar 93
p 8

[From the "Closeup" column by Salamah Ahmad Salamah: "New World Terrorism"]

[Text] Is it possible to accuse "the new world terrorism," a clause matching the new world order, of being responsible for the blast at a cafe in the al-Tahrir Square in Cairo and of the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York? In both incidents, which occurred more or less on the same day, the perpetrators used explosive charges in crowded areas in a theatrical manner to draw attention and cause panic.

All signs indicate that the perpetrators of both incidents are highly professional. The U.S. authorities have recently announced that they detained a Palestinian belonging to the jihad organization, and holding an Egyptian passport, on charges of bombing the World Trade Center.

It was clear from the outset that the accusing finger manipulated by new world terrorism will point to certain targets, which the world had been prepared to condemn. It is well known that the term international terrorism used to refer to groups and organizations whose policies did not please America and which used to receive assistance and support from the Soviet Union. The United States placed these groups on a list of terrorist organizations. However, the serious developments following the disintegration of the Soviet Union made it necessary for Washington to reconsider its definition of international terrorism as a global danger that must be defeated.

Israel was the first to volunteer to find a new enemy of the United States and the West. In a celebrated speech, Herzog specified the new enemy as the Islamic extremists who threaten Israeli security, meaning Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Hizballah, and threaten other countries like Tunisia, Algeria, and Egypt. In other words he wanted to say there is one common enemy.

The developments that preceded the capture of the Palestinian raises several questions:

The United States abruptly ended its dialogue with Hamas and made it clear that it would put it on the list of terrorist organizations. The United States announced this after holding consultations with Hamas to solve the deportee problem.

Two days earlier, Washington announced that American tourists in Jordan would be facing increasing terrorist danger.

The United States reiterated strong accusations that Middle Eastern individuals are responsible for the New York blast.

Many people in the Arab world may not agree with the Israeli definition. Israel seems to be doing all it can to convince all parties that the new world terrorism in the Middle East is the danger that all parties should stand against. These developments open the way for speculation about the extent to which the United States accepts the Israeli definition of new world terrorism and prepares the atmosphere that helps establish an alliance against it.

Musa, Israeli Envoy View Talks With Mubarak

NC0903111893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1018 GMT
9 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 9 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak this morning received new Israeli Ambassador in Cairo David Sultan.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said the new ambassador delivered President Mubarak a message from Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin relating to pending issues between the two countries and the Middle East process.

Asked whether new ideas from Egypt and Israel to solve the Palestinian deportees problem were discussed at the meeting, 'Amr Musa said: We hope to end this issue in a satisfactory manner that helps the peace process and is in line with international law. Current contacts are under way on this issue.

Asked whether contacts to solve the deportees issue will be made at the level of the Israeli and Egyptian foreign ministers, Musa said the possibilities are always open but there are no arrangements.

The new Israeli ambassador in Cairo said he discussed two primary issues with President Mubarak—the peace process and means to boost it and bilateral relations.

The Israeli ambassador refused to go into detail on these issues before conveying the results of his meeting with President Mubarak to the Israeli Government.

Commentary Urges Israel To Prove 'Goodwill'

NC0803160993 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Mahmud Marzuq commentary: "The Deportees and the Future of the Peace Process"]

[Excerpts] The decision made by President Bill Clinton's administration to make the United States a full partner in the peace talks is a significant development in the U.S. position on the Middle East issue. It shows Washington's political interest in achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region. From now on, the United States will be bound to be more actively involved in the negotiations and to try to remove all obstacles preventing the implementation of UN resolutions, particularly 242 and 338, which have set a realistic political framework for a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East. Since these obstacles are primarily created by Israel, it is only natural and logical for the Clinton administration to pressure Tel Aviv to eliminate these obstacles and put the peace process on a new course. This could lead to the aspired peace to which the Arabs look forward as the sole available option to restore peace and stability in the region, eliminate areas of tension and aggression, and build bridges of trust and understanding among the disputing parties. [passage omitted]

Although the problem of the Palestinian deportees has cast dark shadows on the peace process and has delayed the resumption of the ninth round of bilateral talks, the ongoing active diplomatic efforts in the region seek to contain this problem and find a way out of this dilemma. Press reports speak of a U.S. six-point plan discussed by Christopher in his meeting with Palestinian figures during his recent visit. The plan is made up of the following points:

1. The United States will issue a statement emphasizing that expulsions are unlawful, and Washington will guarantee that Israel will implement UN Resolution 799.
2. Israel is fully committed not to expel any more Palestinians.
3. A commitment by Washington that the future rounds of talks will focus on Resolutions 242 and 338 and the status of Jerusalem.
4. Expediting the return of the deportees.
5. Securing the return of some Palestinians expelled since 1967.
6. Israel will agree to stop violating human rights in the occupied territories. [passage omitted]

It is appropriate here to note that any negotiations held among disputing parties need a favorable atmosphere. Furthermore, the negotiating parties must not commit any acts that may provoke the other parties, something that could grind the talks to a halt. Thus, it is imperative for Israel to find a speedy settlement to the problem of the deportees so as to create an appropriate atmosphere for resuming the bilateral and multilateral peace talks. Confidence among the negotiating parties is instrumental for the success of the negotiations. Since the start of the peace march, there has been talk about confidence-building measures. Accordingly, finding a speedy and satisfactory solution to the problem of the deportees

according to Resolution 799 is a preliminary measure for building confidence among the parties. Thus, all parties to the peace talks need to prove their goodwill. The Arab side in particular has done much to prove its goodwill. What remains is for Israel to take a single step to prove its goodwill. Any Israeli decision to take the Palestinian deportees back would be an indication of Israel's goodwill and interest in the peace process. Without it, ill will will mark Israel's conduct in the talks, even if they are held before the deportee problem is solved.

Israeli Policy Said Preventing Mubarak Visit

NC0603112193 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 3 Mar 93
p 1

[Unattributed report]

[Text] [Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq] Rabin's refusal to commit himself not to continue the deportation policy is behind the failure to fix a date for President Mubarak's visit to Israel.

The lightning visit to Israel by Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, followed the failure of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour to achieve concrete results on the deportee issue and the resumption of the peace talks. Both Washington and Tel Aviv expressed a strong desire for Mubarak to visit Israel at an official invitation by Rabin. Israel promised, in return, to make what it termed "tangible concessions." The so-called Israeli concessions, however, were taken by Cairo as insufficient justification for Mubarak's first visit to Israel since he assumed office.

Speaker Said To Turn Down Knesset Invitation

NC0603113293 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 3 Mar 93
p 1

[From "The Week's Secrets" column]

[Text] The Israeli ambassador in Cairo has approached People's Assembly Speaker Dr. Fathi Surur with an invitation from the Israeli Knesset to visit. Dr. Surur reportedly turned down the invitation, saying he could not accept it while the Palestinian issue remains unresolved.

Need for Continued Role in Peace Process Viewed

NC0703160693 Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I in Arabic 1 Mar 93 p 2

[Editorial: "The Egyptian Role and Usamah al-Baz' Visit to Israel"]

[Text] The visit by Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry undersecretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, to Israel yesterday falls within the framework of Egypt's efforts and role in protecting the peace process.

This visit, during which al-Baz delivered a message from President Mubarak to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin and held a series of consultations with Israeli officials regarding the deportees crisis, is merely a continuation of the effective and strong Egyptian presence in the Arab region.

Ever since the beginning of the peace process in Madrid in 1991, Cairo has taken it upon itself to move in all directions to surmount obstacles and resolve problems that might arise here and there. It also wants to bring viewpoints closer regarding the many points of dispute the negotiations have witnessed so far.

The latest of these, of course, was the deportees crisis.

Dr. al-Baz conveyed to Israeli officials strong warnings regarding the need for Israel, as a condition for resuming the peace process, to publicly announce that it will not deport any Palestinians in the future.

Such an effort, which will not be the last of its kind, requires thorough evaluation by the parties involved, especially Israel, which so far has continued to maneuver and play games in the negotiations. Resuming the negotiations is vital for Israel. Apart from that, we would not be exaggerating if we considered the Egyptian role as important if not more important than the role of the United States, which considers itself the primary sponsor of the peace process. Egypt truly could be considered the active and effective partner. In this way it is trying to protect the Arab sides from Israel's technique of taking risks, through which the Rabin government is trying to make all possible gains without losing anything. But according to many people, such a method is outdated when it comes to resolving regional conflicts.

Egypt, as confirmed by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, continues as a successful example of a country that has regained its land from the Israeli occupation. Its experience in this field makes it the cornerstone of the peace process.

From the preceding it can be concluded that Egypt's presence is indispensable; that is, the concerned sides must facilitate this presence. This is because it is in everyone's interest that Egypt's presence and effective role continue, proceeding from its regional influence, Arab identity, experience in establishing the bases for peace, and concern for the future of all the region's peoples without exception.

Al-Baz Cited on Reasons Behind Visit to Israel

NC0703125093 Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-MASAT in Arabic 3 Mar 93 p 2

[Report by Ashraf al-'Ashri]

[Text] Dr. Usamah al-Baz, first Foreign Ministry under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, confirmed that his recent visit to Israel was to narrow the gap between Israel and the Arab countries

directly involved in the peace process. In addition, he searched anew for substantive and acceptable bases for resuming the peace process and preparing for the ninth round of the peace negotiations, scheduled to be held in Washington in April. He added that the visit also aimed to find a conciliatory formula to satisfy the Arabs on the deportee issue so as to ensure that the Arab parties will participate again in the peace process.

Dr. al-Baz denied that there was any link between his visit to Israel and President Husni Mubarak's expected visit to Tel Aviv, as recent reports rumor. He said he did not discuss this matter with Israeli leaders.

Speaking at an intellectual gathering held last night at the [government-run] Public Book Authority center, Dr. al-Baz said Egypt is not currently thinking of restoring relations with Iraq or bringing about a staged Egyptian-Iraqi rapprochement because Egypt believes any rapprochement with the Iraqi regime should be achieved within a united Arab framework, not unilaterally. This stand is based on the fact that the estrangement with Iraq was taken unanimously following its invasion of Kuwait. He added: This rapprochement should, therefore, come at an Arab level because Egypt is committed to the Arab policy and cannot deviate from this commitment under any circumstances whatsoever, regardless of Iraq's endeavors to improve relations with Egypt or other countries.

Dr. al-Baz said there is no agreement between Syria and Israel on settling the Golan issue, adding that such talk is a big lie. He said: No agreement has been reached on this issue. The Syrian-Israeli talks are facing many obstacles Israel raises from time to time, just as it does in the talks with the Palestinians and the Jordanians. He added: Some tangible progress has been made on the Syrian-Israeli front in the past two rounds: The two sides have overcome some of the obstacles that faced them at the start of the negotiations. We hope more progress will be made in the coming rounds, particularly because it is difficult to pinpoint the points or issues that achieved progress in the past round. Hence, there remain fundamental points and issues that require more effort and negotiations to reach tangible results in the coming stage, one year after the start of the negotiations process.

Vatican Official Arrives for Talks 7 Mar

NC0703214993 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 7 Mar 93

[Text] Jean Louis Tauran, Vatican secretary for relations with states, arrived in Cairo this evening on a three-day visit to Egypt, during which he will meet with President Husni Mubarak. He also will hold talks with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa tomorrow afternoon.

Tauran said upon arrival that he carries a message from Pope John Paul II to President Mubarak. He praised the wise policy of the Egyptian leadership and the efforts to establish peace in the Middle East. He said his visit signifies the strength of the relations between the two

leaderships, and that his talks will deal with international developments and ways to boost the peace process.

Musa welcomed the Vatican secretary and said that the talks will deal with the peace process, which interests the Vatican, the Jerusalem issue, the Palestinian problem, and the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Meets With Musa

NC0803113093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1044 GMT
8 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa this morning held a round of official talks with Jean Louis Tauran, Vatican secretary for relations with states, who arrived in Cairo yesterday on a three-day visit.

In remarks following the one-hour talks, the Vatican official said he voiced his appreciation of Egypt's role in advancing the peace process. He said that he exchanged views with 'Amr Musa on developments in the Middle East, noting that the Vatican attaches special importance to these developments.

In his statement, Tauran said the talks dealt with the challenges facing peace, the means to promote the peace process, and efforts to find positive steps to establish peace in the region.

Asked about Israel's failure to implement Security Council Resolution 799 on the return of the deportees, Tauran said it constitutes a violation of international legitimacy, because international law is one of the methods for resolving differences peacefully. Violence has never been a way to solve disputes, the Vatican official said.

Asked about the status of Jerusalem, Tauran said it has a special status because it embraces the three religions and concerns the entire world. Wise men must discuss the status of Jerusalem, the Vatican official added.

Later, President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received the Vatican secretary. Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and the Vatican ambassador in Cairo attended the meeting.

Mubarak Receives Message From Pope

NC0803123993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1158 GMT
8 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has received a message from Pope John Paul II dealing with the peace process and concentrating on Jerusalem.

Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa made a statement clarifying that Jean Louis Tauran, Vatican secretary for relations with states, delivered the message when President Mubarak received him today.

Musa, who attended the meeting between President Mubarak and the Vatican official, said they discussed cooperation and the peace process.

He said he will soon resume talks with the Vatican official to finalize discussion of issues of mutual interest.

He said the discussions will include topics such as Bosnia-Herzegovina and other issues.

Musa on Mubarak Trip to U.S., Terrorism

NC0803141393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1305 GMT
8 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that preparations are currently being made for President Mubarak's agenda during his trip to the United States. The preparations involve several topics, particularly bilateral relations between the two countries, the peace process, the situation in the region, and other subjects dealing with the Horn of Africa and the situation in the Gulf and the Mediterranean.

Speaking to reporters after President Mubarak's meeting with the visitor from the Vatican at the Presidential Office, Musa said President Mubarak's agenda in the United States will include the peace process and bilateral relations, including existing economic ties, investment, and economic aid. Arrangements are under way to prepare for these talks, he added, noting that 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Ridi, a former Egyptian ambassador to the United States, is currently in Washington and is holding, along with the current ambassador, some meetings at the U.S. congressional level.

Asked if the file on terrorism will be discussed with the United States, the foreign minister said the file is open, considering the terrorist operations in the region and worldwide. He said President Mubarak talked clearly about this issue in his meeting the day before yesterday with National Democratic Party officials and in his recent interview with THE WASHINGTON POST.

Asked if President Mubarak will visit European states on his trip to the United States, the foreign minister said this is being studied but no date has been fixed.

On the resumption of the peace talks, Musa said this will be discussed during the meeting of the foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine in Damascus before or immediately after 'Id al-Fitr [22-25 March]. He said the meeting will be preceded by one between him and the Syrian foreign minister in Cairo during Ramadan for consultations between the two countries.

Asked about a possible Egyptian-Syrian summit in Cairo soon, the foreign minister said that Presidents Mubarak and al-Asad meet regularly and that coordination and consultations between them are constant.

Trial of 49 Terrorist-Attack Suspects Opens

NC0903095193 Paris AFP in English 0933 GMT
9 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, March 9 (AFP)—Almost 50 Muslim fundamentalists went on trial in a military court here Tuesday [9 March] accused of attacking foreign tourists and trying to overthrow the government.

The 49, aged between 20 and 25, face possible death sentences for their alleged roles in eight attacks on tour buses and Nile cruise ships in southern Egypt. Six of them are on the run.

They are also accused of belonging to an underground organisation, attempting to overthrow the government and illegal possession of arms and explosives.

The prosecutor, General Muhammad 'Abdallah, said the men were arrested in southern Egypt and the northern city of Alexandria.

Muslim extremists have killed three Western holiday-makers since last September in attacks which caused a 40 percent drop in the number of foreign tourists coming here.

It is the fourth such trial before a military court since December, when eight extremists were sentenced to death by the military court in Alexandria.

The same court sentenced a ninth extremist to death in February.

President Husni Mubarak has ordered the transfer of the trials to military courts to speed up the procedures.

More than 80 people have died since fundamentalist violence surged last March.

The extremist al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah [The Islamic Group], which has led the campaign against foreign tourists, has also threatened to target foreign residents and companies.

Group Claims Attack on Tourists

NC0903135493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1311 GMT
9 Mar 93

[Excerpts] Cairo, 9 Mar (MENA)—The trial of 49 defendants accused of undermining tourism in Egypt and disrupting public order began this morning at the military court complex in the Hakstep area, east of Cairo. Major General Muhammad Wajdi al-Laythi presided with Brigadier General Hamid Sayyid Hasan and Colonel Muhammad Shamil Ramzi sitting as members. The Military Prosecution was represented by Brigadier General 'Ali Baybars, Colonel Talal Najm-al-Din, and Lieutenant Colonel 'Umar Nasif.

The session was attended by 43 of the defendants, 11 attorneys, defendants' relatives, and correspondents from newspapers and Egyptian, Arab, and foreign news agencies. The defendants appeared in civilian clothes

and were led into the dock. They carried signs on which some slogans were written in Arabic and English.

In front of the television and photographers' cameras, defendant Hisham 'Abd-al-Zahir, a leading group member, read out a statement in Arabic. It said that the leader of al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah [Islamic Group] is Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, who is currently in the United States, and that this group is responsible for assassinating late President Anwar al-Sadat, former People's Assembly Speaker Dr. Rif'at al-Mahjub, and writer Dr. Faraj Fawdah and for the assassination attempt on former Interior Minister Zaki Badr, in retaliation for the murder of group leader Dr. 'Ala' Muhiy-al-Din.

In the statement, the defendant admitted that they struck at tourism and tourists in revenge for what he called the government's persecution of Islamic groups.

At the end of today's approximately two-hour session, Court President Major General Muhammad Wajdi al-Laythi adjourned the trial until Saturday [13 March] and ordered that the defendants remain in custody. He also said that the defense lawyers should be allowed to examine the file of the case and that lawyers should be brought to defend the following six defendants, who remain at large: 'Ali Radi Muhammad Mas'ud, Hamadah Isma'il Badawi, Mahmud Muhammad Madani, Salah Sa'ib 'Abd-Rabbuh, Mansur al-Alfi Marzuq, and Yasir Muhammad Mansur.

At the beginning of the session, defendant Hisham 'Abd-al-Zahir stressed that the Islamic groups will continue to strike at tourism and tourists for their own reasons and motives until their goals are achieved. He noted that attacks against tourism and tourists began six months ago and have continued even while the defendants have been in prison.

At the start of the trial, the prosecution's representative called the names of all defendants to ascertain those present. The lawyers representing the defendants identified themselves before the court panel and the prosecution's representative announced that the defendants at large will be tried in absentia. [passage omitted]

After reading the bill of indictment, the court president said the crimes committed by the defendants are punishable under the articles of the penal code and its amendments.

It is worth noting that the penalty for some of the defendants' crimes under the law could include the death penalty.

Al-Jihad Members, Assassination Target List Seized

NC0903112993 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1026 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 9 Mar (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—The state's public prosecution has ordered that 35 terrorist members of the Islamic Jihad Organization be

imprisoned. Al-Jihad members were arrested in the Governorates of Cairo, Alexandria, and al-Qalyubiyah carrying large quantities of leaflets inciting hatred for the regime and advocating violence to disrupt security and public order. A list of key figures targeted for assassination was also seized along with the terrorists.

The defendants held secret meetings in al-Mujahidin Mosque in al-Hadrah area in Alexandria, al-Tawhid Mosque in al-Jizah, and in other mosques in Cairo, Abu Za'bal, and Shubra al-Khaymah to spread the organization's ideas among members, who took verbal and written tests in the mosques.

Prosecutor General Counselor Muhsin Mabruk charged al-Jihad members with belonging to a secret group opposing the regime and pursuing terrorism to spread their ideas among citizens, aiming to obstruct the Constitution and attack freedoms. He also accused them of advocating killings and of carrying out premeditated destruction. Counselor Mabruk ordered the defendants to be detained for 15 days pending interrogation.

'Leading Extremist' From al-Jihad Group Arrested

NC0803195393 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1927 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—Security authorities have arrested a leading extremist element in the al-Jihad Organization. The arrested man, Ahmad Darwish, is a follower of Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, who currently lives in the United States.

Darwish was hiding in an apartment in May 15 City. Security agents found leaflets inciting people against the regime and promoting sedition in his possession.

Security sources believe the extremist is connected with Wednesday's [3 March] assassination of Police Officer Lieutenant Colonel Mahran 'Abd-al-Rahim and his son near Sadfa in Asyut, Upper Egypt.

Security forces have started an investigation into Darwish's connection with extremist elements and terrorists and whether he has been maintaining contacts with al-Jihad Organization leader Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman.

Terrorists Said To 'Control' Asyut Governorate

NC0703212293 Cairo AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY in Arabic 1033 GMT 7 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 7 Mar (AL-AHRAM PRESS AGENCY)—WATANI, mouthpiece of the Egyptian Christian Church, publishes the following editorial today entitled "The Terrorists Exist":

The interior minister has made several statements before the People's Assembly and to the media over the past two months claiming that all the terrorist leaders have been arrested and eliminated, and that the country is

protected from them. Yet after each of these statements, terrorists have carried out organized attacks in various places in Dayrut and Asyut, targeting railway stations and tourist buses in Upper Egypt. After each incident, the interior minister has declared that the culprits and some of their leaders have been arrested. These are empty and hollow statements belied by these groups' frequent attacks.

A bomb exploded this week in a coffee shop in one of Cairo's main squares near the Interior Ministry building. Three people were killed, including two tourists, and several others were wounded. The bomb exploded at 2000, when the square is normally crowded. On the morning of 1 March, the interior minister made an empty statement that the culprits would be arrested within hours. The hours passed and no one was arrested. On 2 March, he said: "The extremist groups will not have another chance, and we will separate them from the people."

Mr. Minister, do you know where they are so you can isolate them? Do you know how many of them there are? Regrettably, you know nothing. We beg the interior minister not to talk so much, because it is meaningless.

I have written several articles stressing that terrorists possess arms and ammunition and live throughout the country, especially in villages and townships. Their leaders are safe, their organizations strong, their plans prepared, and their attacks devised by experts and accurately timed. Their infrastructure is thoroughly protected. Those who are arrested are described in the media as small-timers or as having no connection with these groups. Such people usually are freed following investigations.

I have accurate reports from various quarters in Upper Egypt that terrorists exist everywhere and control Asyut Governorate, the largest and most important governorate in Upper Egypt. The residents follow the terrorists' orders with the knowledge of the police. The names of their leaders are known to the police, who implement their instructions.

O men in power, O Interior Minister, O security men: You must know that by turning a blind eye to these groups' actions for so long, you have made them strong. They have become a major force spreading throughout the country. They have expert leaders, strict laws, and well-studied plans. They possess destructive weapons. They are being financed with huge amounts of money from various quarters. O gentlemen, do not deceive yourselves and our poor people. Deal with reality, not illusion.

Sudan Said To Reject Withdrawing Hala'ib Memoranda

NC0603113893 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 4 Mar 93 p1

[Report by 'Abd-al-Nabi 'Abd-al-Sattar]

[Text] Sudan has rejected Egypt's request to withdraw the memoranda it has sent to the UN Security Council, the Arab League, and the OAU against Egypt.

Egyptian diplomatic sources have confirmed that the Sudanese side has rejected Egypt's request to withdraw the memoranda. Sudan merely said it would not activate them during the coming stage, pending the outcome of the joint committee's work.

The sources said that Sudan pledged at last week's third session of the joint committee in Khartoum that it would not resort to international arbitration to decide the border dispute over the Hala'ib triangle.

The sources added that the political leadership in Egypt and Sudan are currently studying proposals on measures to reduce tension in bilateral relations. The sources underlined Egypt's commitment to halt the media campaign and not to escalate tension despite the Sudanese side's violation of the agreement.

Iran's Attempts To Become 'Colossal' Power Noted

NC0503215393 Cairo AL-AHRAM AL-MASAT in Arabic 28 Feb 93 p 2

[Editorial: "Once Again, Why Is Iran Arming Itself?"]

[Excerpts] In the past few days, news agencies have carried many stories about Iran's feverish endeavors to buy arms and to become a colossal military power in the Gulf region, and the Middle East.

The agencies said Iran is seeking to develop and build long-range missiles capable of carrying chemical and even nuclear warheads that are capable of reaching any capital in the Gulf region. [passage omitted]

What is clear is that Iran is trying to take the utmost advantage of Iraq's defeat, the defeat of communism, and the disintegration of the Soviet empire in order to make itself a regional power. The Iranian press has clearly announced this and emphasized the new-old role which Iran is trying to undertake.

The Iranian leadership is now trying to extend its influence to the north, south, east, and west to bring Iraq and the Gulf region under its hegemony and to plant its extremist concepts in the Islamic republics that were established after the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

Iran did not hesitate to try to extend its influence to the extreme west of the Arab world, like in Algeria where it supported the forces of religious extremism, and tried to export terrorism to Algeria, Tunisia, and Egypt under the cover of Islamic fundamentalism. [passage omitted]

It is clear that after what happened to Iraq, Iran no longer has strong enemies to fear. Therefore, Iran's attempt to obtain conventional, chemical, and nuclear weapons in such a feverish speed is questionable. So, why is Iran arming itself? There is no other answer to this

question except that it is arming itself in order to dominate its Arab neighbors—all its Arab neighbors without discrimination or exception.

Muslim Group Rejects Plan To Control Mosques

NC0503220093 Cairo AL-AHRAM WEEKLY in English 4-10 Mar 93 p 2

[Report by Du'a' al-Bay]

[Excerpts] The Ministry of Awqaf (Religious Endowments), seeking to banish Islamist militants from houses of worship, has decided to extend its control over the so-called Ahliya (civil) mosques—those built and financed by the people. Hitherto, the Ministry had exercised control only over government-built mosques, which make up a mere 12 per cent of about 170,000 mosques nationwide.

The Ministry also plans to tighten its grip on all mosques by specifying the subjects which may be addressed by the mosque Imams in their sermons at the Friday noon prayers. Shaykh Mansur al-Rifa'i 'Ubayd, head of Mosques Administration at the Ministry, defended the government's action as a means of "protecting the houses of God". "Exercising control over all mosques is meant to guarantee that the sermons delivered therein are in strict compliance with true Islamic teachings," he said.

Shaykh 'Ubayd pointed out that even before this decision was taken, the Ministry of Awqaf had always provided the private mosques and "zawyas" (small mosques) with funds to finance their maintenance and pay for the services of the Imams and mosque workers. [passage omitted]

For Ma'mun al-Hudaybi, spokesman for the Muslim Brotherhood, the Ministry's decision is a violation of the freedom of expression. Al-Hudaybi said freedom of expression in Friday's sermons is as vital to society as the freedom to deliver speeches or publish one's viewpoint in newspapers or books.

Instead of imposing restrictions on the Friday sermon, al-Hudaybi said the Ministry and al-Azhar [city containing institutes of Islamic study] should devote their efforts to revising books about Islam. "A widely circulated book that contains inaccurate information about Islam is far more harmful than a Friday sermon delivered to 20 or 30 people in a zawya, even if it contains the same wrong information," he said. Al-Hudaybi expressed fear that the government's action would further promote extremism and violence among young people.

Muhammad 'Amara, a prominent Islamic thinker, argued that any "aggression" on the private mosques is an "aggression" on the majority of Egyptian men of religion as well as people who pray in these mosques. [passage omitted]

New 'Peaceful' Islamic Group Gains Influence*NC0603131593 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 4 Mar 93 p1*

[Text] Asyut, REUTER—Security sources here said a new, peaceful Islamic group has started to spread its influence in Upper Egypt following the intensified pursuit of supporters of extremist groups.

The sources also said the al-Tabligh Group [Delivering the Message Group] enjoys the protection of the citizens due to its peaceful nature. Security forces have been monitoring the group's contacts and links abroad, especially in India and Pakistan, for some time. The sources said the group has sent missions abroad but no suspicious activities have been monitored so far.

The sources also said that the majority of the group's members are young men with a limited education, which does not qualify them to play a religious role. The Islamic Group also limited itself to this role before switching to violent acts.

Bomb Attack Reported on Dayrut Dam, One Injured*NC0703070893 Paris AFP in English 0127 GMT 7 Mar 93*

[Text] Dayrut, Egypt, March 7 (AFP) - Islamic militants late Saturday [6 March] mounted a bomb attack on a dam near here in Upper (southern) Egypt, injuring a guard, police reported.

The assailants fired in the air before escaping after the attack, which targeted the Dayrut dam across the Nile, 320 kilometers (200 miles) south of Cairo and located in a Muslim fundamentalist stronghold.

Police immediately sealed off the area around the blast and have mounted a search.

Egypt—particularly southern Egypt—has been shaken by an upsurge in fundamentalist violence over the past year, which has seen the deaths of more than 80 people, including Muslim extremists, security forces, Coptic Christians, three foreign tourists and a prominent journalist.

The fundamentalists aim to overthrow Egypt's secular government, replacing it with an Islamic administration.

Report of Bombing Denied*NC0703062793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2300 GMT 6 Mar 93*

[Text] Asyut, Upper Egypt, 6 Mar (MENA)—A responsible security source has denied a report about an explosion in Dayrut this evening, saying the report is baseless.

In a statement to MENA, the source said the security forces are launching an intense campaign in several areas where extremists and (?terrorists) hide, following last Wednesday's assassination of Lieutenant Colonel

Mahran 'Abd-al-Rahim, an officer in Asyut's state security intelligence, and his son, Muhammad.

The source added that the security agencies are also conducting large-scale raking operations where the incident took place and nearby areas [word indistinct] to apprehend the culprits.

Sudanese Arrested for Cairo Cafe Explosion*NC0703132193 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1315 GMT 7 Mar 93*

[Text] Aswan, 7 Mar (MENA)—The security apparatus in Aswan has arrested Sudanese national Khalid Harun Mansur, born in Khartoum, after investigations by the Interior Ministry's security forces revealed that he was involved in the explosion in the Wadi al-Nil Cafe on al-Tahrir Square in Cairo.

Major General Husayn Tawfiq, assistant interior minister and chief of Aswan Security Department, made the announcement today. He added that Khalid Harun was captured in Aswan as he was trying to leave for Sudan.

Libya**U.S. Reportedly To Threaten Oil Embargo in April***NC0903105993 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 5 Mar 93 p 10*

[Excerpt] Cairo, AL-SAFIR has learned from sources in the Egyptian capital that President Bill Clinton's administration will intensify the embargo on Libya by early April to include the oil sector and that it is committed to the conditions laid down by former President George Bush for improving relations with the Jamahiriyyah.

The sources said that Washington has officially told Tripoli about six conditions besides those in connection with the Lockerbie case for restoring relations between the two countries. The conditions are:

1. To change the name of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyyah to "The Republic of Libya" or "The Libyan Arab Republic" and turn the secretariats into ministries.
2. To dissolve all the popular and revolutionary committees, establish a party system on the Western model, and hold parliamentary elections following which parliament will supervise the government.
3. To allow all the Libyan opposition members abroad to return and participate effectively in the government.
4. To sell state-owned public establishments to the private sector so that the state will not have a hand in them.
5. To sever relations with all the "extremist" organizations and close their camps on Libyan territory.

6. To provide all the information it has on military organizations supported by Libya, especially the Irish Republican Army.

An informed source told AL-SAFIR that the Clinton administration does not expect flexibility from the Libyan side and will therefore exert strong pressures by playing the card of an embargo on Libyan oil by early April 1993. [passage omitted]

Morocco

Iraqi Envoy al-Tikriti Continues Visit

King Receives Envoy

JN0503201193 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1933 GMT
5 Mar 93

[Text] Rabat, 5 Mar (INA)—Leader President Saddam Husayn's personal envoy, Ambassador Ibrahim al-Tikriti, has delivered a letter from his excellency to his brother King Hassan II of Morocco dealing with bilateral ties and Arab and world developments.

In an audience with the monarch, Ambassador al-Tikriti conveyed to him his excellency the president's greetings and heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of Throne Day. The message wished the Moroccan monarch and his people sustained advancement and prosperity.

Present at the audience were Abdellatif Filali, Moroccan minister of state in charge of foreign affairs and cooperation; Abdelhadi Bu Taleb, the king's adviser; and the Iraqi ambassador in Rabat.

State Minister Meets With Envoy

JN0503172393 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1642 GMT
5 Mar 93

[Text] Rabat, 5 Mar (INA)—[Iraqi] Ambassador Barzan Ibrahim al-Tikriti met in Rabat today with Mr. Abdellatif Filali, Moroccan minister of state in charge of foreign affairs and cooperation. The two officials explored ways of upgrading relations between the two brotherly countries in all areas. They also discussed Arab affairs and bilateral ties.

It emerged from the meeting that the two sides hold identical views on the state of Arab affairs and the need to close Arab ranks and restore Arab solidarity to grapple with challenges facing Arab interests.

Sudan

Signs of 'Large-Scale Military Eruption' With Egypt Seen

NC0903100493 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 5 Mar 93
p 10

[Report by Sami Kulayb from Paris]

[Excerpt] There are increasing signs of a possible Egyptian-Sudanese military confrontation because of the dispute over Hala'ib. Sudanese sources are worried by the increasing tension in the region. They said a large-scale military eruption cannot be ruled out, despite Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa's declaration that his country wants to reach an amicable solution with Sudan.

Responsible Sudanese sources in Paris have told AL-SAFIR that "Egyptian planes attacked Sudanese positions in the Hala'ib triangle last December and that civilians were killed. The Egyptian forces also killed two other people recently."

The sources added: "Egypt has sent two regiments to the region, strengthening the chances of increasing security tension, especially if Sudanese elements break the discipline they have maintained since this issue came under the spotlight."

The Sudanese sources went on to say: "Khartoum still prefers peaceful solutions and the Sudanese forces do not intend to react to provocation. But Egyptian moves give the impression of hidden intentions, which might lead to a large-scale military eruption."

The sources said: "Egyptian moves were based on incorrect information received by security bodies in Cairo saying that our forces are preparing to launch a military attack on the two Egyptian regiments. This prompted the Egyptian Army Command to send in its planes and attack the region."

The sources added: "Friendly countries and parties, including Syria, Libya, and the PLO, continue their efforts to mediate to resolve this conflict peacefully. But these efforts have not led to any positive results."

The sources believe: "Domestic developments inside Egypt concerning the relationship between the authorities and Islamists are the principal motive for focusing the media on the Sudanese Islamic official Dr. Hasan al-Turabi and describing him as the instigator of all the tension." They added: "The issue is much more than that and is part of Egyptian officials' efforts to divert attention from the recent domestic crisis between the authorities and the Islamists. Hala'ib remains the natural outlet for reducing internal tension."

The Sudanese sources went on to say: "Pope John Paul's visit to Khartoum put global attention back on Sudan and renewed international interest in this country following the persistent efforts by some Arab and foreign countries to include it on the terrorism list after the Gulf war. This openness might be one of the reasons Egypt worries, because Cairo wants Sudan to remain an extension of its policy, not its equal." [passage omitted]

More on Increased Tension

PM0503113293 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
4 Mar 93 pp 1, 4

[Reports by 'Umar Muhammad al-Hasan in Khartoum and Muhammad 'Allam in Cairo: "Khartoum Speaks of Egyptian Penetration and Cairo Makes 'Restraining' al-Turabi a Precondition"]

[Excerpt] Khartoum, Cairo—The tension between Cairo and Khartoum reached new heights yesterday when the Sudanese Government accused Egypt of dispatching forces and military vehicles to the Wadi Halfa border area inside Sudanese territory. An Egyptian source has said that progress in efforts to improve relations is conditional on what he called "restraining the role of (Dr. Hasan) al-Turabi," leader of the National Islamic Front [NIF], which supports the Sudanese regime.

Sudanese Government sources told AL-HAYAH yesterday that an urgent cable received from the local government of the northern province adjacent to Egypt said that Egyptian forces and military vehicles "penetrated Sudanese territory north of Wadi Halfa port" on the Nile.

They added that the Egyptian forces were moving toward the area known as the Wadi Halfa Reach near al-Sahabah village. It is believed that the area was once a subject of negotiation between the British governing authorities in Sudan and the Egyptian Government, just like the Hala'ib border triangle.

They also said that Khartoum also received a cable from the Hala'ib authorities indicating that the Egyptian Army had sent new reinforcements to its forces accused by Khartoum of occupying Hala'ib. They warned that the "Egyptian penetration on two axes in Sudan's northernmost area will torpedo endeavors to mend the rift between the two countries."

Diplomatic contacts between the two countries have not stopped, however. Sudanese Foreign Minister Dr. Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih yesterday received Egyptian Ambassador in Khartoum Dr. Hasan Jad al-Haqq, who handed him a message from Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

In Cairo, a senior Egyptian official told AL-HAYAH that his country believes that "the influence (Dr.) al-Turabi's ideas exert on Sudanese decisionmaking is clear and it is the main cause of the deterioration in the relations between the two countries." He said that progress in efforts to improve these relations depends on what he called "restraining these ideas."

He strongly criticized al-Turabi's NIF which, he said, "was behind the failure of numerous Arab mediations between Cairo and Khartoum." He specifically mentioned certain "officials and journalists" who belong to the NIF, adding that they were behind the violation of an Egyptian-Sudanese agreement to stop media campaigns, reached after Libyan mediation. He also said that "this

calls into question (Sudanese Leader) Lieutenant 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir's seriousness about clearing the air." [passage omitted]

Official Views Peace Talks, Hala'ib Issue

JN0803140793 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0803 GMT
8 Mar 93

[Text] Baghdad, 8 Mar (INA)—Major General Muhammad 'Abdallah 'Uwaydah, official spokesman of the Sudanese Army and chairman of the Transitional National Assembly's Security Committee, has asserted that the Iraqi Army is the leader of the Arab and Islamic nation. In a statement to the newspaper AL-'IRAQ published here today, the Sudanese official said that Iraq reciprocated the challenge with a larger challenge and that he was deeply aware of the Iraqi people's solidarity with and adherence to their leadership.

Regarding the situation in southern Sudan, Maj. Gen. 'Uwaydah said that peace is now closer than ever before due to the collapse of the rebel movement's morale and also because the rebel leaders have thrown themselves into the arms of world Zionism. He pointed out that the second session of talks with the rebels will work out a final agreement on the form of federal government.

Asked about the Hala'ib problem and the Egyptian forces' entry into it, the Sudanese official said that Sudan is capable of regaining its territories by all means, but it is now working to make dialogue the basis for solving the problem. There is a joint committee which continues to hold meetings in order to reach a solution that can satisfy both parties. He pointed out that Sudan possesses documents that confirm its legitimate right to the disputed area.

Maj. Gen. 'Uwaydah asserted that the Egyptian regime's hasty military intervention in the Hala'ib area was unjustified. If military intervention had not occurred, Sudan would have granted Egypt whatever territory it wishes to obtain. The intervention occurred due to the presence of outside interference under unstable circumstances in the region. Concluding his statement, the Sudanese official said: If dialogue fails, we in Sudan can only resolve the problem by force in order to regain sovereignty over our territory.

Al-Bashir Receives Message From PLO's 'Arafat

E40803203893 Khartoum SUNA in English 1626 GMT
8 Mar 93

[Text] Khartoum, 8 March (SUNA)—Chairman of the RCC [Revolution Command Council] Gen 'Umar al-Bashir was briefed on the developments of the Palestinian deportees issue by the Palestinian charge d'affaires. The Palestinian diplomat met Gen al-Bashir here Monday [8 March] and conveyed to him a verbal message from the Palestinian president, Yasir 'Arafat.

In a press statement, the Palestinian charge d'affaires said that he briefed Gen al-Bashir on the decision of the

executive committee of the PLO, which affirms that the Palestinian delegation to peace talks will not go to the talks unless the resolution of the security council on the deportees returning is implemented. The meeting tackled also the bilateral relations and means of restoring Arab solidarity.

The Palestinian diplomat said that Gen. al-Bashir had affirmed to him Sudan's unshakeable stance towards the Palestinian issue.

Al-Turabi on Western, Iranian Influence

NC0803134293 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 27 Feb 93
p 16

[First of two installments of an interview with National Islamic Front leader Dr. Hasan al-Turabi by Sa'id Khakrend in Khartoum; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Khakrend] How is the effort to Islamicize Sudan's laws proceeding, in view of developments in the past few years?

[Al-Turabi] The Sudanese people always have firmly believed in Islam and in implementing the Islamic shari'ah. They have expressed this wish repeatedly in various way during the past few years. They exerted so much pressure that [former President Ja'far] Numayri's regime was forced to take steps toward implementing the shari'ah against its will. [passage omitted]

[Khakrend] You said that we have been cut off from the West. In view of this and the new world order and its sovereignty, as well as the West's intense hostility toward Muslims in general, and Iran and Sudan in particular, what kind of ties can we have with the West?

[Al-Turabi] God Almighty has made the government of the Prophet (peace be upon him and his offspring) an example for us. The Prophet's government had to grapple with greater plots and ordeals than we have had to. [passage omitted]

Hence we also can be successful and put these tribulations and ordeals behind us and forge ahead with strength. We are aware that we have traversed the first part of our path despite military, political and propagandistic pressure. We are now struggling for the implementation of Islamic tenets in the economic and cultural spheres. Such wars are being imposed on all Islamic countries and systems.

I am striving to look beyond the perspective of these issues and to think about the future, just as a Muslim looks toward the future more than anyone else and his perspective extends beyond such limited issues.

He plans for today as well as tomorrow, because his perspective extends into the hereafter. Therefore, we see that a Muslim forfeits many worldly benefits and makes many sacrifices so that he may reap rewards later. He must suffer annihilation in order to attain martyrdom so that he can be blessed in the hereafter.

I am not planning for the present era, in which the despotic West has imposed its hegemony, especially following the dismemberment of the Soviet Union and the cresting of the Islamic movement. The West has mobilized all its resources and hostilities against Islam and even against those human values and principles that it itself preaches. [passage omitted]

[Khakrend] In view of the confrontation between Western culture and civilization and Islam, is it possible to benefit from Western civilization without being affected by its negative aspects?

[Al-Turabi] We can learn a lesson from our forefathers, who assimilated their knowledge of science and humanities from Europe. Despite this, they were fortified with theological motivation and used this expertise in science and humanities as a ladder toward attaining that knowledge that brings us closer to God.

Thus, the Muslims were able to surpass the Westerners in their acquisition of knowledge because of their efforts and diligence. They made dazzling progress in these sciences in such a manner that they became their leaders and pioneers. The Europeans were forced to learn medicine, mathematics, physics, chemistry, sociology, law and so on from the Muslims.

Therefore, I am not in favor of segregating the Muslims and the west. I believe that if we are protected by the armor and motivation of religion, we can make a quantum leap in this direction. If we forge ahead in attaining the knowledge of these sciences and technology, we will even surpass the West. [passage omitted]

[Khakrend] The victory of the Islamic revolution in Iran undoubtedly has infused the spirit of freedom into Islamic society, and contemporary Islamic movements were intensely inspired and reinvigorated by the revolution. The Islamic movement in Sudan also has reached a privileged position and can influence African countries. How can the paths to cooperation and coordination between the Islamic revolution in Iran and the Islamic movement in Sudan, as well as bilateral relations, broaden so that this movement can forge ahead and the Islamic uprising and movement transform into a fierce force and affect the entire Islamic world?

[Al-Turabi] The Islamic revolution is seen in Islamic society as a way to mobilize all people into the political arena of struggle. Prior to the victory of the Islamic revolution, there were many Islamic movements that arose from political pressure, fear, and intimidation. The people, however, were afraid to openly declare their movements, mobilize Muslims, and launch their struggle.

The Islamic revolution demolished this wall of fear and taught the Islamic movements that by using the strength of the Muslim masses, the greatest countries in the world can be overcome.

Therefore, in the wake of the Islamic revolution in Iran, the Muslim masses in Sudan, Algeria, Tunis, Egypt, and other countries rose up and the Muslim nations forged ahead. Thus, the movements of the Muslim masses proliferated all over the world and cultural uprisings and political awareness engulfed the entire region. [passage omitted]

All the Islamic movements expect us to set an example. We have witnessed that most of the Islamic movements have taken the first step toward an Islamic government, as was the case with Afghanistan, but they have not been able to move on from the stage of "destroying vice" to the "vindication of their rights." I fear that the Islamic movement also will become embroiled in such problems. It may be successful in destroying tyranny and oppression but suffer defeat in implementing truth and justice and vindicating rights. These movements become confused about how to implement Islamic tenets and commands, especially since they are subjected to foreign pressure. Therefore, our obligation as pioneers of the Islamic movement is to provide a suitable model to these movements for the period following their victory.

[Khakrend] How do you view the general position regarding Islamic movements in the world of Islam, that is in countries such as Algeria, Egypt, Tunis, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and so on?

[Al-Turabi] [passage omitted] Our view of the future is that the burgeoning Islamic movement will move ahead in a dynamic and tumultuous manner. If we cast a general and all-encompassing glance at the Islamic world and appraise the acumen and perceptiveness of the Islamic nations, we will observe that they are disgusted with liberal and Westernized ruling systems, the Eastern socialist systems, nationalistic prejudices, and factional narrow-mindedness. Therefore, the sole means of salvation is in the sovereignty of Islam.

God willing, the Islamic movements will guide these nations toward liberation and victory.

[Khakrend] Ever since the inception of the Islamic Republic under the leadership of Imam Khomeyni (may God be pleased with him) and currently under the leadership of the great leader of the revolution, His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i (may his shadow be lengthened), one of its pivotal slogans has been Islamic unity and fostering the closeness of Islamic schools of thought and a unified leadership of the Islamic world. What is your view on these issues?

[Al-Turabi] [passage omitted] I do not believe in political or religious sectarianism among Muslims. In fact, if the Muslims return to their religious tenets and toward God, they will realize the need for the unity of the Islamic ummah. This is because Islamic history at every juncture is a repository of experiences involving transgressions from which the Muslims should have refrained. We should benefit from those valuable experiences in order to improve Islamic society.

I do not believe in many of the negative and destructive legacies that have been bequeathed to us. I will not say that we have not utilized them. By perusing the economic, social, cultural and political experiences of Muslims, we have benefited, but I do not wish to be influenced by them.

I beseech the Almighty to instill such a degree of awareness in Muslims that would help them attain unity and abandon the past, which was fraught with discord, instead of emulating it. Instead they should keep in mind only its progress, honor, and greatness.

Al-Turabi on Islamism, Iran's Role

NC0803160593 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 1 Mar 93
p 16

[Second and last installment of an interview with National Islamic Front leader Dr. Hasan al-Turabi by KEYHAN correspondent Sa'id Khakrend in Khartoum; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Khakrend] We have heard that you have formulated a plan for unifying the leadership of the Islamic world. At what stage is the plan?

[Al-Turabi] We, the people of Sudan, have a firm belief in Islam, and we are free from all geographical, nationalistic, and other prejudices. We believe that the eastern and western territories are all God's lands and to him the people return. God Almighty is testing us.

The colonialists divided the Islamic world into segments through their domination and aggression. On the one hand, their aim was to ensure their own colonialist interests, and on the other, to dismember the Islamic world to prevent it from uniting against the colonialists. Sudan means "the land of soldiers," and this does not imply any particular geographical or ethnic bias. [passage omitted] If the powerful, colonialistic European countries have felt the need to unite, the Islamic countries, which are weaker, should be united with one another for all effective purposes.

Our unity should be inspired by our Islamic values; therefore, we should have a unified leadership in all economic, social, cultural, and political fields, and the entire Islamic ummah should be a caravan moving on the path toward truth.

[Khakrend] Outside Sudan, you are considered a leader of the Islamic movement in Sudan, and now that the system and government in Sudan are Islamic, we would like to know about your relationship with the Sudanese Government in your capacity as the leader of the Islamic movement.

[Al-Turabi] The Islamic Front is homogeneous because we have the same origins and no one is superior to the other. Therefore, the Islamic Front also is administered in council form. It is not just a political movement, but a cultural, economic, and political movement, a way of

thought. The leadership is in the hands of one who has the qualifications, and the activities in its various departments are delegated to others. Therefore, there were many leaders.

I guide and direct them because I have knowledge of the activities in all the departments. God Almighty decreed that I should be a university professor and should be able to combat Marxist and socialist tendencies. At times I was incarcerated and could not continue my activities, but God granted me success and I was able to return to the scene. [passage omitted]

[Khakrend] If we accept the fact that the Islamic movement in Sudan succeeded in taking over power with the utilization of the Armed Forces and militarists, this question arises: How did the Islamic movement succeed in eliminating the Armed Forces and militarists, who are usually the instruments of dictators in Third World countries?

[Al-Turabi] [passage omitted on history of governments in Sudan] The influence of the Muslims and the Islamic movement in Sudan spread in such a manner that it influenced schools, universities, and even military bases. The people at the bases realized that Islam was being propagated, and the officers also joined the Islamic movement. [passage omitted]

Changes occurred in the Armed Forces and there was a transition from the nationalist to the socialist, and eventually to the Islamic way of thinking, which spread to all the enlightened and educated strata, from the universities to the people and the Armed Forces. When the Armed Forces took power and became the representatives of the masses, they declared that they would implement the Islamic laws and tenets. They were endorsed by the people. The party leaders were forced to accept this political reality, and they also extended their support to the militarists.

This Islamic trend proliferated into the universities, too, and until a few years ago, half the students in the universities were Islamists and the other half was comprised of independent, socialist or Westernized students. At present the majority of the students have been drawn toward Islam, and the nation also has been absorbed into the Islamic fold, led by the Muslim leaders. This situation is immensely satisfying, as the system in Sudan is not just a military regime; the rulers are to implement Islamic shari'ah. This group, however, needs some time to do this. [passage omitted]

[Khakrend] Once the Islamic body of laws based on the shari'ah is implemented in Sudan, is it possible that Sudan will be declared an Islamic republic?

[Al-Turabi] Even if the country is not called an Islamic republic, it will still be an Islamic republic for all effective purposes regarding the implementation of Islamic injunctions in the political, economic, social, and cultural fields. At present, Islam is ruling in Sudan;

Islamic values prevail in society, and Islamic injunctions are being implemented in all fields. [passage omitted]

[Khakrend] The Arab Islamic People's Congress was formed to deal with the problems of Muslims. We did not hear of any stance or action on the part of this congress, however, regarding the Babri Mosque incident in India. Why?

[Al-Turabi] The congress has entered the fray in many issues, such as the Bosnia-Herzegovina and Palestine problems. Regarding Babri Mosque, it was not that it did not take any steps; it just did not publicly declare a position.

We contacted the Indian and Indian Muslim leaders, and certain steps were taken to unite the Indian Muslims. With regard to Bosnia-Herzegovina, we took certain measures, but we did not consider it necessary to announce them. We dispatched some assistance for the Muslims of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and we have strong ties with all the Islamic movements in the world. We do not announce measures we have taken, because the enemies might capitalize on them.

Sudan is hosting many Muslims, and just as Iran is accused of terrorism, so is Sudan. We do not want to give the West an opportunity to spread such propaganda about us.

[Khakrend] Following the collapse of the communist system in Afghanistan, the Afghan mujahedin unfortunately became embroiled in group conflicts. Since you have close contacts with the leaders of most of the Afghan factions, have you ever made any mediation attempts to halt this bloodshed, and if so, what were the results?

[Al-Turabi] Even before the conflict in Afghanistan reached this stage, I had warned our Afghan brothers, especially those whom I knew closely and those with whom I was casually acquainted, that they should be prepared for the period following victory. They said the Soviet Union was a strong superpower, and that therefore the chances of victory were slim.

They did not think too far ahead, and therefore they did not think there was any chance of victory. [passage omitted]

Unfortunately, the West has fanned sedition in certain countries by enlisting the assistance of some Muslim countries so that an Islamic form of government cannot be established in any country. The West wanted a system to be set up in Afghanistan that would ostensibly be Islamic, but in essence would be subservient to them. When they did not succeed, they sought to fan sedition among the various groups so that their strength might dissipate as they inflicted blows against one another.

The Americans do not want an Islamic government in Afghanistan and had assisted the Afghan mujahedin in the period before their victory so they could topple the Marxists. This, however, was on the condition that the

alternative would not be the establishment of an Islamic regime. Many other Arab and Islamic countries assisted the United States in fanning this sedition.

I hope God Almighty gives us the ability to return unity to the ranks of these brothers so they can overcome their tribulations.

[Khakrend] Do you have a message for the Iranian nation?

[Al-Turabi] Iran is a country in the heartland of the Islamic world that has become a pioneer in contemporary times by establishing an Islamic government. It is a rich country endowed with the Almighty's blessings and has an abundance of subterranean and agricultural resources. Therefore, our Iranian brothers are responsible for evolving an Islamic model for a political economic, scientific and cultural system, so that Islam does not become a mere slogan, but a model for the entire world to emulate.

Iran is obligated to support all Muslims, as well as the Central Asian Muslims, who have just succeeded in demolishing the wall of strangulation and silence and need the support of other Muslims. Iran can be a friend and benefactor to all of them, more than any other country.

The Asian Muslims are under much pressure, and the Muslims west of Iran and in Arab countries also are under dictatorial regimes. Africa is also close to Iran. Therefore, our Iranian brothers should be well aware that their obligation before God is not only to help reconstruct their own country following the devastation they have suffered; they should know that the Muslims and the Islamic world are one and the same, and no country can reach independence unless the countries in its vicinity also attain independence and help one another.

Iran can play an important role in eliminating religious differences from among the Muslims and to see that Muslims unitedly tread the true path.

Some Muslim countries, especially those in which monarchies prevail, are afraid that the Islamic revolution will influence their countries and that the monarchies will be replaced by republics. Therefore, they resort to fanning sectarian differences so they can block the Islamic Revolution's influence. Iran should surmount this problem and create a jurisprudential movement. [passage omitted]

We are aware that our problems are similar to those of Iran, and therefore we should be alongside one another so that we can overcome our problems and thus absorb [jazb] the Islamic movements and exert pressure on the enemy. This will force the Westerners to comprehend reality and to take it seriously. This will at least mitigate their pressure on us.

We beseech God Almighty to grant success to the Islamic movement in all aspects and to help us succeed in the implementation of divine injunctions.

RCC Member Reaffirms Unity of Sudanese Soil

EA0603154093 Omdurman Sudan Broadcasting Service Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 6 Mar 93

[Text] Major General al-Tijani Adam al-Tahir, member of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] has affirmed that the unity of Sudanese soil cannot be an object of bargaining trade or bartering. He warned whoever tried to separate the south, to prepare for a long and bitter fight.

Major General al-Tijani added that the revolution places at the vanguard of its national responsibilities the achievement of peace with the complete unity of Sudan. The revolution will not accept that a specific group takes the unity of Sudan as a card with which to play and trade.

He emphasized that any attempt from any quarter to tear apart the unity of Sudanese soil will be faced with a (clear) rejection, and it will be resisted by all the nationalist elements, not only in the south but also in the north, east, and west.

Kuwait

Protest Lodged With UN on Renewed Iraqi Territorial Claim

PM0803154193 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 5 Mar 93 p 1

[Muhammad al-Damyan report: "Sabah al-Ahmad Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Kuwait Has Lodged Official Complaint Against Claims"]

[Text] Kuwait—Kuwaiti First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah has stated that Kuwait has submitted to the United Nations an official protest against Iraq following the latter's revival of its talk of an Iraqi claim to Kuwait.

In an interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad said that what was recently published by the Iraqi newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH concerning Iraqi claims confirmed an already established fact, namely that "Iraq is not interested in implementing the Security Council resolutions and continues to defy the international community."

Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad added that the Iraqi regime had lost its international credibility "and its tricks are now exposed to the whole world." Kuwait, he emphasized, has been independent and will remain so, and "the claims made through that regime's media will not harm it."

Shaykh Sabah further stated that the region would never enjoy stability so long as Iraq is ruled by the present regime. He pointed out that "Kuwait does not interfere in Iraq's internal affairs, and it supports Iraq's territorial integrity."

In his interview, the Kuwaiti foreign minister reaffirmed Kuwait's full commitment to the Damascus Declaration, which he described as "a sound Arab umbrella for joint Arab cooperation between the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states and Egypt and Syria."

Shaykh Sabah repeated that his country refuses to restore relations with the states which supported the Iraqi invasion, especially Jordan and the PLO. He said that "these two parties openly supported the aggression and they still back and support the Iraqi regime's false claims."

He said that in his recent tour of some Arab and Asian states he focused on exposing the Iraqi regime's practices and its failure to implement UN resolutions, particularly the resolutions on the issue of the POW's and hostages. He added that Kuwait was following the Arab League's efforts in this connection.

Iraq's Kurdish Leader Talabani Continues Visit

Urges Overthrow of Iraqi Regime

LD0803142893 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1325 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Kuwait, 8 Mar (KUNA)—[Passage omitted] Jalal Talabani said on arrival that the Iraqi regime has no economic, national, or religious reason for its existence, that all requirements for overthrowing it are now available, and that the important thing is to unify and mobilize the Iraqi people's capabilities to execute this mission and cooperate with the neighboring countries. [passage omitted citing Talabani as saying that the Iraqi opposition, as represented by the Unified Iraqi National Conference, has condemned the Iraqi aggression on Kuwait, and has supported all the international resolutions on border demarcation between the two countries; he also says that the Kuwaiti prisoners in Iraq are being constantly moved from one prison to another, and are being badly treated]

Talks of Training Camp for 'Liberation Army'

NC0803183093 Paris AFP in English 1801 GMT 8 Feb 93

[Text] Kuwait City, March 8 (AFP) - The Iraqi opposition has set up a training camp in the Kurdish-held north ahead of the formation of a "liberation army," an Iraqi Kurdish leader said here Monday.

Jalal Talabani, on his first visit to Kuwait since the 1991 Gulf War which evicted Iraq, said the move aimed to "mobilize the Iraqi people and unify the opposition to discard the dictatorial regime" of President Saddam Husayn.

"A military training camp for the Iraqi opposition to the regime, made up of Kurdish fighters as well as Iraqis who took part in the popular uprising, has been set up to prepare for the creation of a liberation army," he said.

Talabani was referring to the anti-government revolt which erupted in several parts of Iraq after its defeat in the war for Kuwait.

The formation of an army was one of the decisions taken at an opposition congress in Sala-al-din, Iraqi Kurdistan, last September, the leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan said. He said the Kurdistan Front, a coalition of Kurdish opposition groups, approved the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border as laid down by the United Nations as well as all UN resolutions on Iraq.

Explosion Reported at Audio Store in Khitan

LD0903100893 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0839 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] Kuwait, 9 March, KUNA—A large explosion occurred at an audio recording shop in the area of

Khitan today. It caused great material damage to the shop and the adjoining shops, but did not result in any loss of life.

In a statement to KUNA today, Colonel Shamrukh al-Nasim, commander of the Khitan area, expressed his belief that the incident is an act of sabotage and aggression. He said "explosives experts have started to investigate the causes of the incident."

He mentioned that "the causes behind the series of explosions that have taken place recently in the Khitan area are unknown."

The most recent of these incidents took place last Thursday at an audio recording shop in one of the commercial complexes in the Khitan area, causing some material damage to the shop.

Saudi Arabia

Afghan Leaders, Pakistani Premier Arrive in Medina

LD0803185693 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Excerpt] The leaders of the main Afghan mujahedin factions, led by His Excellency President Burhanuddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, and Engineer Golboddin Hekmatyar and Sobghatollah Mojadeddi, arrived in Medina this afternoon. His Excellency Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, prime minister of Pakistan, also arrived in Medina on the same plane. [passage omitted]

King, Pakistan's Sharif View Peace Accord

LD0803124393 Riyadh SPA in English 1217 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Jeddah, March 8, SPA—Custodian of the two holy mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz received a telephone call from Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif who conveyed to the king, the results reached by the leaders of the Afghan mujahedin who signed in Islamabad a historic peace agreement to end 12 months of bloody fighting in Kabul.

Sharif expressed the deep appreciation and gratitude of the Afghan and Pakistani peoples to the constructive and pioneering role of the kingdom under the guidance of King Fahd in reaching the agreement.

King Fahd congratulated Nawaz Sharif and all Afghan leaders on this blessed step and wished the Afghan people lasting and comprehensive peace with more understanding and reconciliation.

On the other hand, Pakistan President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, during a meeting with Afghan leaders in Islamabad on Sunday night, praised the efforts of King Fahd for peace in Afghanistan.

Khan praised the assistance and support extended by special envoy of the Saudi monarch Prince Turki al-Faysal during a whole week of active negotiations and inter-Afghan dialogue which culminated today in a historic agreement which call for an immediate ceasefire in Afghanistan and settlement of other thorny issues.

The text of the agreement which was officially released in Islamabad last night said the agreement came in response to the call of King Fahd last January to solve the Afghan differences through peaceful dialogue.

The text said also the Afghan leaders appreciate the positive role and the good offices of Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the positive support of the kingdom's efforts, which dispatched a special envoy to the peace talks in Islamabad.

Observers in Islamabad said the Saudi envoy has played a key role in the success of the Afghan dialogue.

Leaders of the Afghan mujahedin are expected to arrive in Medina later today.

Council of Ministers Meeting Hails Afghan Accord

LD0803234993 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2252 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 8 March (SPA)—His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, crown prince, deputy prime minister, and commander of the National Guard, presided over a Council of Ministers meeting this evening, at Yamamah Palace in Riyadh.

In a statement to SPA after the meeting, Minister of Information 'Ali al-Sha'ir said that at the beginning of its meeting the council reviewed the most important developments in the Islamic and Arab arenas and followed up the events of the hour at the political and security levels in various regions of tension. In that context, the council expressed its deep pleasure and satisfaction at the historic agreement reached by the leaders of the main Afghan mujahedin factions to establish a lasting peace in Afghanistan, which was signed yesterday in Islamabad in response to the calls made by the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, and in response to the persistent efforts of the custodian of the two holy mosques, Pakistan President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. These efforts have come to fruition for the benefit of the Muslim Afghan people to enable them to devote themselves to build their capabilities and regain their activities in development, economic, constructional, cultural and educational fields. The council regarded this beneficent achievement in the blessed month of Ramadan as a good step toward stability in Afghanistan in an atmosphere in which understanding and solidarity among all the factions and leaders prevailed. [passage omitted]

Further Report

LD0903141993 Riyadh SPA in English 1221 GMT
9 Mar 93

[Text] Riyadh, March 9, SPA—The Saudi Council of Ministers, which held its regular weekly meeting here last night, expressed its delight and satisfaction over signing of a historic accord by factions of Afghan mojahedin to bring about a lasting peace in Afghanistan in response to appeals of custodian of the two holy mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz and constant efforts of the Saudi monarch and Pakistan President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Mohamed Nawaz Sharif.

The council hoped that the good fruits of this accord would be reaped by all Afghan Muslim people and it would help them to go on the reconstruction process of their country and to restore its activities in all developmental, economic, urban, cultural and educational sectors.

The council, whose deliberations were presided over by Crown Prince Abdullah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the deputy premier and commander of the National Guard, reviewed the most important developments in Arab and Islamic arenas and political and security developments in all tense regions of the world.

In a statement to the Saudi Press Agency at the end of the cabinet session, Information Minister 'Ali Sha'ir said the council considered this accomplishment (the signing of the accord) as a blessed step towards the stability of Afghanistan in an atmosphere of understanding and solidarity among all factions and leaders.

The council, then, discussed a number of local issues on its agenda and listened to explanations made by Prince Abdullah on them in the light of views expressed by ministers.

It took appropriate decisions on a number of issues on its agenda.

'Palestinian Source' Cited on New York Blast

JN0903170693 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
7 Mar 93 p 2

[Text] Baghdad—A Palestinian source, who did not disclose his identity, told AL-JUMHURIYAH: We do not want to be hasty and give our viewpoint on the explosion that took place in New York, but we stress that Palestinian parties have no connection with such operations.

The Palestinian source stressed that the Western media and quarters have accused Palestinian parties of carrying out the operation even though Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has issued a statement condemning the operation and denying that it had any link to it.

The signs emphasize that Zionist movements in New York, which are widespread in that U.S. city, are behind the explosion. The source said U.S., Israeli, and European media have started to distribute responsibility and charges against this or that party without having substantial facts. This means that they want to draw attention away from the real perpetrators.

Minister Writes UN Chief To Protest U-2 Overflights

JN0803214593 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio
Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Iraq has officially asked UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali to halt the use of the U.S. U-2 spy plane by the Special Commission because this plane is being actually used for purposes other than those mandated by the Security Council. This request came in a letter Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf sent to the UN secretary general and Security Council president today on the revelations published by British newspapers regarding a rehearsal conducted by Zionist military units to assassinate leader President Saddam Husayn, based on U.S. assistance provided by satellites and the U.S. U-2 reconnaissance plane, which flies over Iraqi territory, taking off from an air base in Saudi Arabia, violating Iraqi airspace. The letter affirmed that the activities of the U.S. U-2 spy plane pose threats to Iraq's sovereignty and security, noting the written letters the Iraqi foreign minister had earlier addressed to the UN secretary general in this regard, strongly protesting and condemning these spy activities. Up to 3 March, these letters have totaled 59. These letters pointed out that 118 violations of Iraqi airspace were committed by the aforementioned U.S. plane.

'Text' of Protest Letter

JN0903071093 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2120 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Baghdad, 8 Mar (INA)—Iraq has officially asked UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali to halt the use of the U.S. U-2 spy plane by the Special Commission, because

this plane is being actually used for purposes other than those mandated by the Security Council.

This request came in a letter sent by Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf to the UN secretary general and Security Council President (Terence Christopher O'Brien) today on the revelations published by British newspapers regarding a rehearsal by Zionist military units to assassinate President Saddam Husayn, based on U.S. assistance provided by satellites and the U.S. U-2 reconnaissance plane, which takes off from an air base in Saudi Arabia to overfly Iraqi territory and violate Iraqi airspace.

The letter affirmed that the activities of the U.S. U-2 spy plane pose threats to Iraq's sovereignty and security, referring in this regard to the written messages the Iraqi foreign minister had earlier addressed to the UN secretary general, in which Iraq strongly protested and condemned these spy activities. These letters totaled 59 up to 3 March and registered 118 violations of Iraqi airspace by the aforementioned U.S. plane. The following is the text of the letter:

Your Excellency Butrus Butrus-Ghali, UN Secretary General, New York: I would like to inform you of a serious matter that was recently disclosed. The British MIDEAST MIRROR in its 2 March 1993 issue, a copy of which I enclose herewith, reports that an Israeli army unit was planning to assassinate President Saddam Husayn and that the Israeli army command had been collecting information over the past two years on President Saddam Husayn's moves with U.S. assistance provided by reconnaissance aircraft and satellites.

The MIDEAST MIRROR says that a body-heat-seeker missile, equipped with highly-sensitive monitoring devices, and electronically guided had exploded on 5 November in the Tze'elim base in the Negev, killing five of the Israeli army special unit which was carrying out a rehearsal in the southern part of Israel on how to assassinate President Saddam Husayn.

The MIDEAST MIRROR also says that Major General Amiram Levin [name as received] commander of the Israeli group tasked with the assassination operation had in mind to carry out the attack inside Iraq, depending on the information collected by the Israeli army command on the movements of President Saddam Husayn through the assistance of the satellites and reconnaissance planes.

The world media organs have also carried these reports, which are a cause for strong indignation and anger because they reveal policies, actions, and criminal designs that violate all the principles and international laws, regulations, and ethics.

Your Excellency: Since 12 August 1991, the U.S. Government has been dispatching the U-2 spy plane to continuously fly in Iraqi airspace. Since that date, this U.S. spy plane has been violating Iraqi airspace three or four times per week on the pretext of conducting reconnaissance missions for the Security Council's Special

Commission. This plane violates the Iraqi airspace after taking off from an air base in Saudi Arabia.

Iraq strongly protested and condemned these acts of espionage in letters sent to you by the foreign minister, which totaled 59 letters up to 3 March 1993. These letters pointed out that this U.S. spy plane violated Iraqi airspace 118 times.

Your Excellency: In all of these letters, we emphasized that this plane is used for purposes other than those specified by the Security Council and that its activity harms Iraq's sovereignty and security. Today, we provide you with additional proof of our previous affirmations. The information published in the MIDEAST MIRROR and propagated by many world newspapers and media, including Israeli newspapers such as the 4 March 1993 issue of HA'ARETZ, as well as British newspapers such as THE SUNDAY TIMES, and also the U.S. television network CNN. All these papers and media affirm that the vile Israeli scheme to assassinate President Saddam Husayn relied on U.S. assistance provided by reconnaissance planes and satellites.

We once again affirm our official request to halt the Special Commission's use of the U.S. U-2 spy plane because it is actually being used for purposes other than those specified by the Security Council and also because its activity poses a threat to Iraq's sovereignty and security. Iraq had frequently proposed alternatives that will meet the Special Commission's request without harming Iraq's sovereignty and security. Please circulate this letter as a Security Council document. Please accept our best regards.

[Signed] Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, foreign minister of the Republic of Iraq

[Dated] Baghdad, 15 Ramadan 1413 Hegira, corresponding to 8 March 1993

Arab League Informed of 'Airspace Violations'

JN0803114093 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0936 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (INA)—Iraq has informed the Arab League secretary general of the continued violations of Iraqi airspace by U.S., British, and French aircraft taking off from air bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

In a letter to Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al- Majid, Iraq's permanent Arab League representative said that these violations constitute a serious threat to Iraq's security, sovereignty, and national unity. The letter pointed out that on 4 and 5 March these hostile aircraft, taking off from air bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, continued to violate Iraqi airspace and carried out 80 air sorties.

Iran Urged To Return Aircraft, Apologize for 'Crimes'

JN0703121393 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0902 GMT 7 Mar 93

[Text] Baghdad, 7 Mar (INA)—The newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH has called on the Iranian regime to release Iraqi prisoners and return Iraqi aircraft in observance of the international law and its provisions.

In an article today, the newspaper says that the Iranian leadership should turn the leaf full of bitterness and pain caused by its policies against Iraq and its great people.

The paper adds that Iraq has not hesitated to launch noble and courageous initiatives toward Iran before and after the great day of the call [the day Iraqi troops entered Kuwait] despite the brazen Iranian interferences and dispatch of infiltrators into Iraq to tamper with the security of its governorates and cities under exposed and flimsy covers.

The paper explains that the Iranian leadership reflected the reality of its evil intentions when it took advantage of the circumstances of the great battle in which Iraq led the entire gathering of the faithful against total evil. Then, Iran played a sinister and wicked part when it assumed the dirtiest role against Iraq and its steadfast, militant people.

The paper says that the Iranian leadership, taking advantage of the tragic circumstances experienced by the Iraqis, sent cliques of infiltrators into Iraq to pillage its cities, kill innocent souls, and disfigure the bodies of their victims, who were children, women, elderly, and other honorable Iraqi citizens who took pride in their true national, pan-Arab, and Islamic affiliation.

Concluding its article, AL-JUMHURIYAH says that the Iranian leadership should apologize to the Iraqi people for its responsibility for the crimes and brutal attacks committed against them by Iranian infiltrators during the chapter of treachery and treason.

Syrian Regime's 'Plotting' Against Iraq Assailed

JN0903112793 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0725 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] Baghdad, 9 Mar (INA)—The newspaper AL-QADISIYAH has affirmed that Hafiz al-Asad's regime continues to play its suspect role in plotting against Iraq and the Arab nation through all ways and means. In an article today, the paper ridicules the Syrian regime's allegations that it works for the Arab nation's unity and freedom. In fact, the Syrian regime is moving the nation from one slippery road to another within the game of bargains and concessions. This game also involves the containment of slogans and adapting them to serve the peace settlement as well as a retreat from all that the Syrian regime announces or calls for.

AL-QADISIYAH says that one of the results of the aggression on Iraq was that the Syrian regime was given a free hand in Lebanon in order to accomplish the mission assigned to it; namely, to finish off the resistance in southern Lebanon and entrench the Zionist occupation there, in return for some Zionist concessions to the Damascus regime on the Golan Heights occupied in 1967. The paper notes that the then defense minister, Hafiz al-Asad, handed over these heights without firing a single bullet in defense of them several days before the Zionist enemy captured them.

AL-QADISIYAH adds: The major obstacle to the Damascus regime's open recognition of the Zionist entity is the presence of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party system in Iraq, which expresses the nation's genuine principles and embodies them in its conduct, stands, and achievements. Therefore, the basic objective of al-Asad's regime in past years was to plot against Iraq using all ways and means even to the extent of opening Syrian airspace to the Iranian aircraft in order to bomb Iraqi installations or standing alongside the imperialist and reactionary forces, which this regime claims it is fighting, in order to destroy Iraq and finish off its revolutionary system.

AL-QADISIYAH says that when Faruq al-Shar', the Syrian regime's foreign minister, blamed the aggression's regimes for failing to achieve this objective, he was simply openly expressing the Syrian regime's obsession. This is because the Syrian regime sees great Iraq standing lofty along with its militant people and its unique leader, who has embraced the nation and loved it so much that he is directing his struggle and that of his deep-rooted people toward realizing the Arab nation's unity and dignity.

Concluding, AL-QADISIYAH says: The Mother of Battles expressed the nation's ability and brilliance while it was facing the fiercest destruction machine known to mankind. The Iraqi people and their great leader were the nation's tumultuous pulsation which instills life in its veins at a time when the dwarfs fall under the feet of tyrants and lowly ones. History will only recall these dwarfs as moths which eat the nation's body, and which the nation will remove so that it will emerge safe and sound, taking pride in its glory and dear sacrifices for the nation's might, dignity, and new future.

PUK's Talabani Favors 'Good-Neighborliness' With GCC

NC0503215493 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1600 GMT 5 Mar 93

[Text] Brother Jalal Talabani, secretary general of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK], has said that the Iraqi opposition is endeavoring to establish relations of good-neighborliness with the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] member states.

Brother Talabani welcomed the statements of Kuwaiti National Assembly Speaker Ahmad 'Abd-al-'Aziz in Damascus, in which he urged the Iraqi opposition to

adopt frank and clear stands on the Iraqi regime's claims on Kuwait, particularly regarding the issue of border demarcation.

Brother Talabani said the next Iraqi regime must clearly recognize the state of Kuwait and the international borders.

Kurdish Figure Voices Loyalty to Saddam

JN0703150293 Baghdad INA in English 1350 GMT 7 Mar 93

[Text] Baghdad, Mar. 7, INA—Mr Baha'-al-Din Ahmad, chairman of the Legislative Council of the Kurdistan autonomy rule area said that those betting on America, Britain, France and the Zionist entity to realize their suspicious plans in the area must understand that those evil and greedy states were assisting them only for destroying Iraq and encroaching upon its dignity, sovereignty and integrity of land.

Speaking to AL-THAWRAH newspaper of Baghdad to mark the anniversary of the 11th March manifesto, Mr. Ahmad said that forthcoming days would uncover to the traitors and agents this fact and they would regret the atrocities they had perpetrated under the Zionist and American umbrella against our Iraqi people and Kurdish masses.

The Kurdish official added that Iraq Kurdistan was turned, thanks to the continued care extended by President Saddam Husayn into a prosperous region where hundreds of projects were implemented.

Mr. Ahmad further said that the Legislative Council continues efforts for exposing the Zionist and imperialist plotting on Iraq including the desperate attempts to disintegrate Iraq's national unity.

He stressed that the Kurdish people commit to boosting struggle for preserving the autonomy rule and the integrity of Iraq and restoring the state of law and order.

Mr. Ahmad expressed in the name of all honest sons of the Kurdish people commitment and allegiance to the leadership of President Saddam Husayn and to the unity of Iraq.

Funding Seen as Opposition's Main Problem

PM0803123593 London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic 5 Mar 93 p 28

[Interview with 'Arif 'Abd-al-Raziq, "an Iraqi opposition leader and former prime minister," by Usamah 'Ajjaj in Cairo; date not given]

[Excerpts] ['Ajjaj] What is the truth about the Iraqi opposition crisis, which causes all quarters to rule it out as a legitimate alternative to the present regime in Baghdad, although all quarters wants such a change to happen?

[Abd-al-Raziq] Financing is the Iraqi opposition's problem. The problem is how to secure the money, volunteers, and propaganda. Who can confront the Iraqi Army, which—despite all that happened—is 400,000-strong and has some 2,500 tanks and 2,000 guns? It is a regular army which the opposition cannot confront. The Iraqi people are in a real dilemma: 12 years of continuous war between Iraq and Iran and the coalition forces, and over a million killed, captured, or wounded. And another million have been displaced. There is not a single family which has not been afflicted in a war or in the regime's attacks throughout the country. The dinar's exchange rate has reached the lowest of levels. One dinar used to be exchanged for three dollars. Now it is 40 dinars to the dollar. A tray of eggs now costs 60 dinars, while a senior employee earns only 300-400 dinars. That is, his salary cannot buy him four or five trays of eggs. The Iraqi citizen is now miserable, frightened, hungry, and sick.

[Ajjaj] If the situation is that bad, then it is a good opportunity for the Iraqi opposition to work for change.

[Abd-al-Raziq] Yes, there was a basic idea relying on the existence of discontent inside the Iraqi Army and in the central region, which is where the regime is based and which it controls. Baghdad alone contains one quarter of the Iraqi population. This is in addition to the need to choose reputed leaders in the central region—leaders who enjoy the masses' confidence and who would rally the people around them. This is in addition to creating living opportunities for a group of volunteers that would become a nucleus for a grouping to comprise all those who reject the Iraqi regime from among the people and the Army. According to our assessments, there is a section of the regular forces which could join such a grouping.

[Ajjaj] So you emphasize that the Iraqi opposition's crisis is financing?

[Abd-al-Raziq] Yes, it is a financing crisis.

[Ajjaj] Many people thought it was to do with the program.

[Abd-al-Raziq] What do you mean by program?

[Ajjaj] A program that defines the features of the stage which will follow the present regime?

[Abd-al-Raziq] This is a thorny question. Indeed there are people who are thirsty for disagreements and others who await revenge on a sectarian basis, be it the Shiites, Sunnis, Kurds, or Turkomen. The matter should be viewed from an Iraqi angle away from any classifications. I once told a famous French journalist: I have no objection to Mustafa Barzani ruling Iraq, but as an Iraqi, not as a Kurd.

[Ajjaj] Do you not believe that Saddam Husayn's remaining in power despite the Iraqi people's suffering and the embargo imposed on them is a riddle which requires an explanation?

[Abd-al-Raziq] The Iraqi people have been led to understand that the West and the coalition killed their sons and destroyed their installations and homes. In view of the hellish propaganda machine inside the country, many Iraqis believe that Saddam fought over 30 states, and so he is a hero. As for those who are more aware of matters and understand them better, they are completely powerless. He is ruling the country by force, violence, and oppression. He has powerful security services and his eyes are everywhere and in all the military sectors. With regard to those who are not loyal to him, they have nothing to look forward to except execution.

[Ajjaj] Do you believe there is a possibility of a dialogue being opened between the new U.S. Administration and Iraq in view of Clinton's recent statements?

[Abd-al-Raziq] I rule that out.

[Ajjaj] Why?

[Abd-al-Raziq] They (the Americans) distorted Saddam Husayn's image, leveled all bad attributes at him, and portrayed him as a criminal. So I do not believe that any wise person would link his fate with Saddam Husayn's. Rapprochement might take place with the U.S. Administration in 10 years, if Saddam remains in power. But at present, I do not believe that Clinton can open a dialogue with him, for fear for his interests.

[Ajjaj] But U.S. interests require that Saddam Husayn remain in power as part of a delicate regional equation. And the Iranian power, which could threaten Western interests, is an additional factor for keeping Saddam Husayn in power!

[Abd-al-Raziq] States see things which we do not see. There is real fear about Iraq's partition. They want Iraq to be one coherent unit not dominated by a particular religion or sect. And I do not believe that a strong Iran is required. They want Saddam to be neither strong nor weak so that he will not threaten Israel or be transcended by Iran and Turkey.

[Ajjaj] But anyhow, they want him?

[Abd-al-Raziq] They do not want him personally. They want a regime that guarantees Iraq's unity. [passage omitted]

[Ajjaj] Everyone relied on the Army in the past. Do you believe that the Army wants to be the tool for changing Saddam Husayn?

[Abd-al-Raziq] I do not believe that the Army can be a tool for change. The Army was hit and has no strength now. The Army can be a tool for stability after change. That is its role in the post-Saddam stage.

[Ajjaj] What is your opinion of what is being said about the opening of "some Arab windows" to Saddam?

[Abd-al-Raziq] Do you mean what 'Arafat is doing? I believe that everyone is urged to reexamine his calculations before taking such a step, namely dealing with Saddam Husayn.

[Ajjaj] Did a dialogue take place between the Iraqi opposition and the new U.S. Administration?

[Abd-al-Raziq] They want to get rid of Saddam as a regime. They want a regime that restores stability to the region, otherwise their interests would be affected. Their prime concern is for Saddam not to remain in the Gulf—a region of power and oil—especially after all his excesses in the war with Iran and during the battles with the coalition forces. [passage omitted]

[Ajjaj] Do you believe that Talabani's recent statements to an Israeli newspaper were a kind of "offering" and flirtation toward Washington via Tel Aviv?

[Abd-al-Raziq] The statements are completely wrong. They do not help Talabani, the Kurds, or the opposition at large. But it seems that the hardship being experienced by the Kurds and the crisis they going through forced him to seek help from Israel. [passage omitted]

[Ajjaj] If Saddam goes, who will rule Iraq?

[Abd-al-Raziq] A transitional leadership. And a certain committee formed from a 10-15 member salvation council can supervise elections after a year or two.

[Ajjaj] Does any opposition party have a presence inside Iraq?

[Abd-al-Raziq] The al-Da'wah Party and Baqir al-Hakim's group [Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq] may have a presence. In the center there is not a single organization, and I would find it difficult to believe anyone who claims otherwise. [passage omitted]

State Begins Implementing Major Irrigation Project

JN0803160793 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
2 Mar 93 pp 1, 2

[By Maryam al-'Atiyah]

[Excerpts] Mosul—The state engineering higher committee has begun implementing the one-phased southern al-Jazirah project, which will irrigate an area of 600 donums of agricultural lands in Mosul Governorate.

AL-JUMHURIYAH has learned that this project will raise the production of wheat and barley up to 420,000 tonnes to meet the country's needs for these two basic items. [passage omitted]

It has been learned that two months ago, the Ministry of Industry and Minerals began irrigating northern al-Jazirah under the supervision of Dr. Ja'far Diya', adviser at the Presidential Office. This great project is aimed at growing strategic items used in the national industry. [passage omitted]

Al-Qadiri Pulls Out of Opposition Group

PM0503112693 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 3 Mar 93 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Al-Qadiri Resigns From Opposition Iraqi Accord Grouping"]

[Text] London, exclusive to AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI—Isma'il al-Qadiri yesterday announced his complete pullout from the opposition Iraqi National Accord Grouping [tajammu'al-wifaq al-watani]. In a statement which he distributed to newspapers he said that his resignation was final for political reasons, including failure to adopt democratic methods in the grouping.

Al-Qadiri hinted at disagreements between him and Salah 'Umar al-'Ali, the most distinguished official in the grouping.

AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI has learned that this pullout is to do with an Iraqi move to establish a new national coalition equal to the Iraqi National Congress, which is based and holds its regular meetings in Salah al-Din in north Iraq.

Talks Invitations Said To Be Issued This Week

TA0903054893 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] Information has reached Jerusalem indicating that the United States and Russia will issue invitations to the next round of bilateral peace talks this week. According to reports, the negotiations will resume on 19 April.

Official Israeli sources believe that all parties, including the Palestinians, will attend the talks. It is predicted that the invitations will be sent before Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin arrives in the United States at the end of this week.

[Reporting on Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0505 GMT on 9 March, political correspondent Shlomo Raz says: "According to an assessment voiced in Jerusalem and the Israeli Embassy in Washington," the invitations will be issued within the next three days "in order to avoid creating the impression of a link between the prime minister's visit to the United States and the dispatch of invitations." Raz adds that "a report received from the Israeli Embassy in Washington says that the Americans and the Russians will send the invitations without taking the Palestinian stance into account."]

'Secret' U.S. Message Details Expectations From Rabin

TA0903080793 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 9 Mar 93 p 1

[Report by Hemi Shalev]

[Text] On the eve of the expected official U.S. announcement on the resumption of the peace talks, the administration has asked that in his discussions next week in Washington, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin present his plans and scenarios for the future of the political process between Israel and the Arab countries.

In a secret message which arrived last night, a senior U.S. Administration official notified Jerusalem that the United States will soon announce the resumption of the peace talks. The message says that the administration is in the final stages of checking out the suitability of 19 April as the date for resuming the talks. When it finishes, within the next few days, the United States will publicly announce the resumption of the talks and the issuance of the invitations to them.

The message says that one of the reasons for this step is to prevent the "technical matter" of the resumption of the talks from becoming the central issue during the prime minister's visit to Washington, due to begin on 12 March. At the same time, Jerusalem officials have said that the Americans believe that a public announcement on the resumption of talks might accelerate the Arab world's decisionmaking regarding the talks.

The message further says that the United States requests that the prime minister outline his "overall vision" of the future of the political process, including his view of the American role in it. It should be noted that the United States remains vague on the nature of the "full partner" role it has assumed. According to a report received in Jerusalem, the United States does not rule out the possibility of presenting unofficial position papers (non- papers) [last word printed in English] to bridge gaps between the parties.

It should be stressed that this intention does not coincide with Rabin's view of the U.S. role. Rabin opposes the presentation of "bridging offers" by the United States.

The U.S. message says that the United States expects to hear from the prime minister about "the parameters and principles" of the continuation of the peace process, including future arrangements between the parties. At the same time, the administration has not explicitly requested that Rabin come with a "peace map" or clear statements regarding the extent of the expected Israeli withdrawal.

Yesterday, Rabin continued his consultations toward the upcoming trip to Washington. On 7 March he held meetings about the defense agenda of his visit, and on 8 March he started consultations, primarily with the heads of Israel's analysis mechanisms, to formulate the political presentation.

Sources in the prime minister's bureau last night dismissed the reports about the administration's alleged intention to offer Israel "secret military agreements," as columnists Evans and Novak reported yesterday. The sources noted that Rabin will indeed discuss with his hosts a lengthy series of strategic cooperation arrangements, including expanding Haifa Port and turning it into a home port for the 6th Fleet, storing U.S. military equipment in Israel, and handing over surplus equipment to the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. The sources said, however, that there is nothing new about these issues and, in any event, there is no intention of discussing changes in the general scope of the strategic cooperation agreement.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0505 GMT on 9 March carries a live telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Beilin by Hayim Zissowitz. Asked to comment on the Evans and Novak report, Beilin says: "I cannot confirm it. I do not have the slightest idea about it. I can only say that, in principle, this commentary contains one valid point: Because the Golan Heights is very important for our security as long as there is no peace, the security arrangements we can attain with the Syrians and with third parties will facilitate our withdrawal from a part of the Golan Heights. This is definitely true, but I do not know whether the details they report are correct."]

Envoy Sees Breakthrough in Next Round*TA0903084093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 9 Mar 93*

[Excerpt] Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's envoy in Washington, anticipates that a breakthrough will be achieved in the talks with Syria which will resume next month. Amb. Rabinovich says, however, that Israel will not present its terms for a Golan withdrawal before Syria explains its concept of the nature of peace.

Addressing a Florida synagogue gathering, Itamar Rabinovich praised the stance of President Clinton, who has demonstrated involvement in the peace process, and said that without such American involvement, no peace accord with Syria will be achieved.

Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres yesterday voiced the hope that a peace accord with Syria will be achieved before the end of the year. [passage omitted]

Beilin on Talks Resumption, UK-PLO Dialogue*TA0903082493 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 9 Mar 93*

[Telephone interview with Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin by Mikha Friedman and Ya'el Dan—live]

[Text] [Friedman] Good morning, Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin.

[Beilin] Good morning.

[Friedman] Does the imminent dispatch of invitations to the negotiating parties mean that the Palestinians have already agreed or are about to agree to return to the negotiating table?

[Beilin] Even if invitations specifying a date—there is talk of the second half of April—are indeed sent, this will not necessarily mean that the Palestinians have agreed to it. It will mean that both the Americans and the Russians are determined to pursue the peace process and not to allow any party to veto its continuation.

[Friedman] But you do not believe the peace process will be resumed as long as the Palestinians remain outside?

[Beilin] I do not rule out this possibility. I would sincerely like them to be inside the process. This is what the Government of Israel has always intended. We are definitely committed to a comprehensive move, but we will not allow any party—be it the Palestinians, Syria, Jordan, or Lebanon—to determine the fate of the entire move only because that party is apprehensive about joining it. We will certainly be prepared to hold discussions with any party that arrives in Washington in the second part of April.

[Friedman] Is it possible that the dialogue between the European countries—with Britain heading the list—and the PLO, which has enhanced the organization's legitimacy, will encourage the Palestinians to return to the

negotiating table rather than move them further away from the talks, which is what Jerusalem fears?

[Beilin] I find that hard to believe. I think the Palestinians are turning to Europe because they realize that neither the Americans nor Israel has accepted their far-reaching demands to discuss permanent arrangements, Jerusalem, etcetera already at this stage. They think the Europeans can help them, but there is no doubt that not only are the Europeans unable to help them with these issues, they may create the illusion that the Palestinians stand to gain by toughening their stands and staying away from the negotiations. I am very much afraid that what happened both in Brussels and in London in recent days, which reflects a certain European willingness to bestow additional legitimacy on the Palestinian cause, will not promote the negotiations but rather render them less achievable, and that is something we would wish very much to avoid.

[Friedman] Does yesterday's murder in the settlement of Gan Or, which has been attributed to the so-called Fatah Hawks organization, affiliated—at least ideologically—with the same Palestinians with whom we are negotiating, make the process more difficult?

[Beilin] First of all, it provides additional proof for those who are willing to bestow full legitimacy on the PLO, or even only on Fatah, that this body has not abandoned terror; on the contrary, it has escalated its attacks, and it does not deserve a prize for that.

As for us, we have always drawn a line between the two. We have always said we will not allow these terrorists to prevent us from achieving our goal, our national objective: peace and security in the region. We will not let stone throwers or murderers prevent us from coming to the negotiating table, and if at least one other party comes to that table, we will discuss peace with it.

[Dan] Just one question about a development in the Foreign Ministry: We heard today that Director General Hadas has been asked to retire before the end of his term and that there are plans to appoint a new director. Does the ministry know who the new director general will be?

[Beilin] I read this in a newspaper, and I cannot comment on such reports. Both the foreign minister and the Foreign Ministry director general are abroad, and I am certain they will gladly answer the question when they return.

[Dan] Are you prepared to confirm the request for Hadas' early retirement?

[Beilin] No, I am not.

[Friedman] Dr. Beilin, thank you very much.

[Beilin] Thank you.

No U.S. Encouragement of UK-PLO Contacts Seen

TA0903061093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin met yesterday at the Foreign Ministry with Britain's Ambassador to Israel Andrew Burns to explain Israel's position on the apparent elevation of contacts with the PLO. Reporter Miryam Herschlag asked Deputy Minister Beilin what he told Ambassador Burns:

[Begin recording] [Beilin] I deplored it, and I said that it will not contribute to the peace process but heighten illusion for the Palestinians that maybe it will be easier for them to go to the Europeans—in that case, to the British—and to talk with them, instead of deciding to resume the negotiations with us in Washington next month. I hope very much that it will not be the result of such talks, but any diversion from the Madrid formula will be a negative contribution to the peace process in our eyes.

[Herschlag] How can Israel ask Britain not to speak with PLO members when it is negotiating with people so closely identified with the PLO?

[Beilin] We do not talk to official representatives of the PLO, and this is the mistake, while talking directly to official representatives of the PLO in such a high level is, in our eyes, a negative contribution, because that is a very clear indication of diverting from the Madrid formula—something which was agreed upon by the Palestinians about a year and a half ago. That is the only formula on which we are talking to the other side and in which framework we can achieve, eventually, a peace agreement or, at least, an interim agreement.

[Herschlag] Do you know the reason for Britain's change in policy?

[Beilin] Well, the explanation given to me by the ambassador was that they believe this is the way to promote the process, to encourage the moderate Palestinians to get back to the negotiating table. That's why they thought it was time to increase the level of the contacts with the Palestinians.

[Herschlag] Do you think Britain is getting encouragement from the United States to raise the level of contacts with the PLO?

[Beilin] Not at all. This is not my feeling. I do not think that the Americans are involved here and, if at all, they will not encourage something like that which they themselves oppose. [end recording]

Double Gain Seen in Withdrawal From S. Lebanon

TA0903131493 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 7 Mar 93 p B1

[Commentary by Gay Bekhor: "Beirut First"]

[Text] The collapse of the 17 May 1983 agreement between the Israeli and the Lebanese Governments—a dim echo of the Likud government's aspiration to a new order in Lebanon—brought every Israeli Government to the conclusion that Lebanon will be the last Arab country to arrive at a political arrangement with Israel. Even today, the working premise of Israel's representatives to the peace talks is that only after a Syrian-Israeli arrangement is attained will we get Beirut almost as a bonus.

This premise was true in the climate of Israeli-Syrian strife on Lebanese territory. It is less appropriate today, when Jerusalem and Damascus are evincing readiness to arrive at an arrangement.

Yet from Israel's viewpoint, the problem of its border with Lebanon—the firing of katyushas and the loss of soldiers—is most troubling. For that reason, Israel has a vested interest in solving the problem first and foremost—and even more so since the security zone barely achieves its objectives.

In Washington, the Israeli Government can present the Lebanese and the Syrians with a two-to-three-year target date for full Israeli withdrawal from the security zone. In parallel, the Lebanese Army will deploy gradually and in a controlled manner in south Lebanon. Its deployment will be accompanied by the disbanding of Hizballah strongholds, as it was done in al-Biq'a' and is beginning to be done without resistance and under Syrian supervision in Beirut areas and even in other enclaves in south Lebanon, such as Tyre and Sidon. In later stages, the Lebanese Army will deploy in the security zone, involving the SLA [South Lebanese Army], which was conceived out of a rift in the Lebanese Army in the days of Major Haddad, in the arrangement.

The Israeli withdrawal will be contingent on the implementation of other security measures in southern Lebanon, and the "Lebanon first" process will be escorted by the United States, whose ties with the Beirut government are improving constantly. In the framework of the arrangement, Washington will grant Lebanon, which has already appealed for U.S. aid for military procurement, enhanced policing tools (that will suffice for internal security while not jeopardizing Israel) as well as financial aid and guarantees for continued economic rehabilitation.

The Lebanese Army's strength in the 1960's and early 1970's, when its Intelligence Branch practically ran the life of the Palestinian refugee camps, is widely remembered in south Lebanon.

While Lebanon has a vested interest in regaining control in the south, as it has in Beirut, in the north, and in al-Biq'a', Israel will be doubly remunerated: Stability will be restored in south Lebanon, and a political arrangement, whose nature will be established in coordination with Lebanon and Syria, will be achieved.

Israel will find withdrawal from Lebanon easier than its other withdrawals: Since there are no forefathers' lands

to forsake, no controversy will split Israeli society, and the ensuing vacuum will not be filled by an army liable to pose strategic danger to Israel's existence. This is further supported by the fact that both Lebanon and Syria agree that the arrangement with Lebanon should be based on Security Council Resolution 425, without any link to Resolutions 242 and 338.

For Syria, which watches the Israeli-Hizballah bloodshed from the sidelines, the situation is convenient. Nevertheless, an arrangement promising greater stability in its protectorate and full Lebanese control in south Lebanon would be preferable, if only as a touchstone of Israel's readiness to withdraw. Unlike the accord signed between President Amin al-Jumayyil and the Government of Israel in 1983, an Israeli-Lebanese agreement achieved at present would not be signed in defiance of Syrian wishes; it would win at least the tacit consent of Damascus.

An intriguing process is under way in Beirut and al-Biq'a with respect to Hizballah, and it is that process that gives basis for a hope that a phased Israeli-Lebanese arrangement will prove itself. In areas controlled by the Lebanese Army, Hizballah has become in every sense an almost political movement which abides by the rules of the game of politics and political sovereignty. It is represented by 12 parliament members, and its military activists gradually convert their operations to independent civilian systems, such as banks, hospitals, public relations centers in Beirut, and development enterprises, such as road works. Contrary to the theory that Hizballah would militarily oppose state authority, the Shiite movement has not once clashed with the al-Hariri government, and it has downgraded its military characteristics in Beirut areas. Its almost only remaining military characteristic is the struggle against Israel.

There is thus a fair chance that when Israel presents a target date for withdrawal, Hizballah—spurred by Syrian support and the determination of the Lebanese and the U.S. Governments—will disband its strongholds in south Lebanon. And the movement will have another motive: It will be able to present the withdrawal as a victory of its battle to force Israel out of Lebanon.

Brother of 'Arafat Adviser Murdered in Gaza

TA0903095893 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 9 Mar 93 p 4

[Report by David Regev]

[Text] The brother of one of PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat's advisers was murdered by masked men in the Jabalyah refugee camp yesterday.

Arab sources reported that Muhammad 'Ali Abu-Shabak (24) was murdered in revenge for orders his brother, Rashid Abu-Shabak, had issued to murder local residents.

According to the sources, this is the first time a brother of a senior PLO member has been murdered in the Gaza Strip. They noted that this might spark conflicts between the rival factions in the Gaza Strip.

A general strike was staged in Jabalyah yesterday following the murder, and a Fatah Hawks squad that arrived at the site fired shots in the air and declared the man an intifadah martyr. Gaza notables also arrived at the family's residence to pay their condolences.

Name of Detained Palestinian American Released

TA0903084793 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Report by territories correspondent Udi Segal]

[Excerpt] The part played by the man detained in the affair of the American connection to the reconstruction of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] infrastructure in the territories is still unclear. A week ago, the authorities detained 33-year-old construction engineer Anwar Hamdan, a native of al-Birah who currently resides in Louisiana in the United States. Hamdan, a member of one of the richest families in the territories, is suspected of assisting in the rebuilding of the Hamas infrastructure following the arrest of hundreds of the organization's activists and the deportations to Lebanon.

Hamdan's connection with Muhammad Salah and Muhammad Jarrad, the two U.S. citizens detained about three months ago and who are still in detention, is also unclear. The third detained U.S. citizen, Muhammad al-Hijjah, was released three weeks ago, after the Ramallah Military Court ruled that the evidence against him was insufficient. Hamdan's investigation continues. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Deported for 5 Years After Signing Deal

TA0403104593 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 4 Mar 93 p A3

[Report by defense correspondent Eytan Rabin]

[Text] Majd Kurazin, a 24-year-old fugitive from the village of Buruqin in the Janin area, was deported to Jordan over the Allenby Bridge on 2 March after signing an agreement with the defense establishment whereby he was voluntarily expelled for five years instead of being tried. The wanted man was detained by the security forces on suspicion of belonging to a hostile organization. During interrogation, Kurazin confessed to the actions he was charged with. Under the agreement, Kurazin can return in five years if he does not carry out any terrorist activity and does not confer with hostile elements.

Defense sources told HA'ARETZ that such deals are made with people who have not killed anybody but who are responsible for second- or third-degree terrorist

activity. The sources said that there have been several dozen such deportations since the start of the intifadah and that there is every intention of continuing them.

IDF Kills Arab Youth in West Bank

TA0803194593 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Taysir Jum'a, an Arab youth from the Nur al-Shams refugee camp in the Tulkarm area, was shot dead during a clash with the IDF [Israel Defense Forces]. The incident occurred when Arabs stoned an IDF patrol in east Tulkarm tonight. The soldiers fired at the group in order to disperse them, hitting the youth in the chest.

Two Arrested for Suspected 'Terrorist' Activity

TA0903072693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] Two young Israeli Arabs have been arrested on suspicion of setting up a cell of the Black Panthers in the

Galilee village of Judaydah. One of the suspects is Huways 'Adnan Haddad from Nazareth, and the other is a 16-year-old youth whose name has not been released. Security sources say the two planned to carry out terrorist acts inside Israel using weapons they had obtained in the territories.

Correction to UK Envoy Summoned to Foreign Ministry

TA0808195993

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "UK Envoy Summoned to Foreign Ministry Over Ties With PLO," published in the 8 March Near East & South Asia DAILY REPORT, page 49:

Column one, third paragraph, second sentence, make read: ...Douglas Hogg, UK minister of state for foreign affairs (correcting name and title)

Prime Minister, Faysal al-Husayni Discuss Peace Process*JN0803133693 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1200 GMT 8 Mar 93*

[Text] The prime minister, al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, received at his office today Faysal al-Husayni, member of the steering committee of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir and the Palestinian charge d'affaires in Amman.

During the meeting, they reviewed conditions in the region and the results of the tour which U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher made recently to Middle East capitals.

Views were also exchanged on ways to cope with the obstacles Israel is placing in the way of the resumption of the peace talks. The two sides asserted the significance of continuing Jordanian-Palestinian coordination at this very delicate phase.

Mr. al-Husayni said in a statement after the meeting that the Israeli repressive and arbitrary measures against the Palestinian people in the occupied territories will lead to more acts of violence there, and that the only solution to put an end to them is to end occupation and to give momentum to the peace process.

Asked about the issue of expellees and whether it is acceptable to solve this problem in stages, Mr. al-Husayni said the basic question is expulsion itself, and we do not want the expulsion of Palestinians to be repeated in the future.

He reiterated that Israel should implement United Nations Security Council Resolution 799 calling for returning the expellees home.

Mr. al-Husayni said that he will leave for London for discussions with British officials on the obstacles facing the peace process.

Asked about the meeting of the foreign ministers of the Arab frontline states participating in the peace negotiations, Mr. al-Husayni said: No date has yet been fixed for the meeting.

Al-Sharif on Censorship, U.S. Warning, Peace Talks*JN0603113493 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 6 Mar 93 p 6*

[Interview with Information Minister Mahmud al-Sharif by Riyadh Mansur in Amman; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Mansur] Let us begin with the accusations against the Information Ministry. We are here only conveying what is being said by the people. They say the

ministry continues to brandish its sword against the press. What is your reply to these accusations?

[Al-Sharif] I deny this in part and parcel. Give me some evidence in support of these accusations. There is absolutely no Information Ministry sword brandished against the press. We brief journalists on the state of affairs and occasionally meet with the chief editors to brief them on the latest developments. Any objection we may have in connection with the state's domestic and foreign policy is usually prompted by a desire to maintain national interests. We inform them of certain things, but we do not order or punish them, nor withdraw licenses or fine them as was the case in the past. We do not interfere at all in the newspapers' daily performance. Our relationship with the chief editors falls within this framework. Consequently, I can categorically deny all accusations. Any practices contrary to this have to be proven. I am not ready to engage in rumors or gossip.

[Mansur] The people continue to believe that the ministry is still the main authority and the absolute master of the daily press.

[Al-Sharif] Wrong perceptions do not concern me and I do not know how you can deny this. If you as journalists feel that the ministry is dominating your paper and interfering in your work, then say so. It is your responsibility to correct this wrong perception by announcing that the ministry does not interfere in your work. I cannot stop every citizen and tell him that the ministry does not interfere with the press. It is the responsibility of the press itself to correct any wrong ideas the people may have.

[Mansur] Despite democracy, the Press and Publications Department continues to confiscate papers and books. Is this department outside the democratization process?

[Al-Sharif] Censorship exists in all democratic states. There is censorship in even the states where freedom is extensive and where immoral magazines are published. There is a lot of hard evidence on what I am saying. Censorship existed in Jordan and will continue to exist under democracy because it is the government's responsibility to protect the people's morals. It prevents the circulation of printed material that encroaches on religion. The confiscated publications are those which violate the press and publications law. The censor does not apply the law haphazardly, but according to specific and clear criteria. Any publication violating the provisions of the law is denied circulation. Thus, there is no relationship between censorship and democracy. Democracy does not mean you can read or say anything. Democracy has its own ceiling which is not always decided by the government, but by the traditions of the society itself. What is permissible in Britain and Sweden, for example, should not necessarily be permissible in Jordan. This has nothing to do with governments, but with traditions. Do I have to allow Salman Rushdie's book to be circulated in Jordan in the name of democracy? Will this help

maintain security? There are limits for the circulation of publications. [passage omitted]

[Mansur] Let us talk about the partisan press. Where has it reached and what do you think of it? Will the daily partisan papers be licensed?

[Al-Sharif] The current press law does not discuss party publications. However, Article 17 of the parties' law issued recently gives the parties the right to issue newspapers. Therefore, we are now in a state of suspended animation between a law that is about to fade out which does not mention the parties and a law which is yet to see light which mentions the parties.

Legal counselors have given the opinion that since there is a provision in the parties' law allowing the parties to issue newspapers, this should be added to the relevant provisions of the current press law. We have come out with the proposal to grant the secretaries general of the parties licenses in their own names but allowing their papers to be mouthpieces of their parties. This was done with the al-'Ahd [Pledge] and al-Mustaqbal [Future] Parties. We gave the Communist Party a similar license two days ago. The Popular Unity Party will also be given a license. But these are weeklies. No party has yet applied for a daily newspaper. I do not know if there are parties capable of issuing a daily newspaper because of the immense cost involved. Therefore, I believe that most of the parties will issue weekly or biweekly publications.

It is possible to license a daily newspaper for a party if they apply. There is nothing to prevent it. As for licensing daily newspapers, they will have to wait for the issuance of the new press law. I would like to make it clear that no censorship will be applied against any party paper printed in Jordan. Censorship will be applied only against papers issued outside the country. However, these papers must abide by certain things and restrictions stipulated in the law. If they trespass on these rules, the judicial authorities and not the executive authority will try them and rectify their course. This applies to all Jordanian papers, not only the party papers.

[Mansur] Since the issue of the press has awakened your nostalgic feelings, [reference to al-Sharif's former position as editor in chief of AL-DUSTUR], let us set it aside and discuss the anti-Jordanian campaign, especially following Washington's warning of terrorist threats against U.S. nationals. Some say this campaign has yet unraveled ramifications. What is your position on this situation?

[Al-Sharif] I do not think that this is accurate. We in Jordan are used to opposition from this or that state to our national, clear, frank, and spotless policies as expressed by his majesty the king. We are accustomed to this atmosphere and we are no longer worried about it or afraid of it.

In this country we do not make our policies based on the possible reaction of others. These policies are based on our traditions, reality, and the interests of our country.

We present these policies in a polite way and do not try to compel others to be convinced of them, although we would be pleased if they were so. On the other hand, we do not allow anybody to impose his policies on us. At present I do not see that there is an anti-Jordanian campaign but there is a chill in our ties with some fraternal Arab countries. This will be left for time to heal. We will not ask forgiveness of anybody, nor will we apologize. I believe that the time will come when everyone will be convinced that our past stand was a genuine pan-Arab one.

Perhaps there are media hostilities with one or two states in the region. Regarding the recent development of the U.S. warning to American nationals, I have already reacted to that and said that Jordan is safer than certain areas in the United States itself; it is not our tradition to attack tourists. Even during the Gulf war when we were at odds with half the world, not a single foreign tourist was attacked because we are a hospitable people who will not flex their muscles toward male or female tourists. This has not happened and will not happen.

I voiced my surprise about this subject. We are now holding a dialogue with the United States to learn the background of this measure. We, however, will not interpret it as the beginning of a U.S. campaign against Jordan. During his visit to Amman, Christopher praised Jordan's policy and its democratic process. There is no disturbance in Jordanian-U.S. relations and we do not consider what happened to be the beginning of a pressure campaign. A mistake was made somewhere and we are trying to confine it to its framework without magnifying the issue and depicting it as if it was the beginning of a war of words between Amman and Washington.

[Mansur] Let us now discuss the Arab-Israeli peace talks and the Jordanian position on the issue of deportees.

[Al-Sharif] His Majesty King Husayn expressed the Jordanian stand during Christopher's visit. I have nothing to add to his majesty's words. He emphasized Jordan's commitment to the peace process and warned against the collapse of negotiations. He also explained our position on the issue of deportees and called for solving this problem so that all parties can attend. Efforts are currently under way to solve this problem. As for the progress so far made, the foreign minister is better able to talk about it.

[Mansur] Some are talking about an imminent cabinet reshuffle. Can you confirm this?

[Al-Sharif] I know nothing about this subject. According to my knowledge, the cabinet will continue to perform its task until his majesty the king decides otherwise.

[Mansur] News agencies sometimes speak about lukewarmness in relations between Jordan and Iraq. Can you explain this?

[Al-Sharif] There is no lukewarmness in the Jordanian-Iraqi relations. We as a government and state are doing

our best to see an end to the suffering of the Iraqi people, and this is our primary concern. The situation within Iraq is not our business nor is it the business of others; it is the business of the Iraqi people themselves. We continue to exchange views with the brothers in Iraq, but they have their own standpoint and we have ours. We respect their decisions and call for an end to their suffering.

[Mansur] Is there any development in Jordanian-Saudi relations and are there mediations to clear the air?

[Al-Sharif] There are always good mediators in this nation, but the brothers in Saudi Arabia do not have a serious inclination to forget about the Gulf war.

[Mansur] Our last question: How does the information minister view inter-Arab relations?

[Al-Sharif] Inter-Arab relations are at a stalemate; they are motionless. Prior to the Gulf war, Jordan made signals in various directions urging this nation to rectify the situation and abandon the revenge-taking mentality. Regrettably, no response was made to these signals and things remained as they were. This prompts Jordan to leave things as they are in the hope that the brothers will realize that alienation harms them more than it harms Jordan.

Crown Prince Hasan Wants 'Benelux' Formula for Region

PM0803155793 Milan PANORAMA in Italian 7 Mar 93 p90

[Interview with Crown Prince Hasan Bin-Talal by Alvaro Ranzoni; place and date not given]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Ranzoni] What future for your region?

[Hasan] I would like to see the realization for this part of the world of a formula along Benelux lines, with a strong degree of pluralism and participation and the development of a model based on equality. Trade and open borders are the ultimate aims of peace.

[Ranzoni] Opening the borders essentially concerns Israel. How can this problem be solved?

[Hasan] [Israeli Foreign Minister] Shim'on Peres maintains that there are three obstacles to opening the borders: security, fundamentalism, and the Arab boycott. But the boycott is more in word than deed, since Israeli citizens' income is 14 times that of the Palestinians. To abolish it immediately would be economic suicide for the Arabs.

[Ranzoni] What is the solution?

[Hasan] If we wish the boycott to be gradually removed, we must give oxygen to the neighboring Arab economies. That is why it is necessary to concentrate on agreements which tackle problems at their roots. The World Bank is

preparing to launch development plans on the West Bank as though it were talking about an intervention to safeguard an endangered species. Today we are taking care of the Kurds, tomorrow the Palestinians, then the Somalis... And when the fashion changes, we will concern ourselves with the Bosnians.

[Ranzoni] What do you propose, then?

[Hasan] The enactment of regional plans in which the same social and economic rights are guaranteed for everybody.

[Ranzoni] But is it really possible to think in terms of a regional plan between countries with serious imbalances and tremendous tension, governed for the most part by dictators?

[Hasan] That is why in Jordan we are aiming for democracy. You cannot fight the internal or the external enemy without the people's participation. This is borne out by Lebanon, where there is a serious imbalance between Maronites and Shiites. It is borne out today by the Balkans. And I fear the balkanization of the entire Middle East, what with the Kurdish question, the Shiite question, the Sunni question, and all the other ethnic and sectarian contradictions, unless democracy and participation are introduced. For the so-called fundamentalists it is easy in this situation to promote one single ideology from Afghanistan to Algeria and, if they find the international financial backers, to move toward restoring the caliphate.

Paper Stresses Commitment to Joint Delegation to Talks

JN0703091093 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 7 Mar 93 p 1

[Editorial: "Jordan Will Not Attend Negotiations Without the Palestinian Delegation"]

[Text] During the early tours of former U.S. Secretary of State Shultz, His Majesty King Husayn announced Jordan's full commitment to supporting the Palestinian people and their just cause and also to providing an umbrella for the Palestinian negotiating team within the framework of the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation. King Husayn confirmed this commitment during Baker's tours, and meant what he said. The king's stand was serious.

Therefore, his majesty's statement to NBC television yesterday that Jordan will not go to the negotiations without the Palestinian delegation was an honest and true translation of the principled Jordanian stand.

King Husayn yesterday announced that the deportees should return to their homeland in compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 799 in order to remove an insurmountable obstacle to the resumption of peace negotiations and in affirmation of the need to honor the resolutions of international legitimacy.

His Majesty King Husayn confirmed this stand to U.S. Secretary of State Christopher during his tour of the region. The Jordanian delegation is committed to a joint delegation with the Palestinian negotiating team. It is inconceivable, or rather impermissible, that one side of the joint delegation goes to the talks without the other side.

True, Jordan cares a great deal for the available peace opportunity and for the resumption and success of the negotiations, but, at the same time, Jordan is eager not to enable Israel to implement its plans to empty the occupied territories of their inhabitants.

Therefore, the U.S. Administration and the Security Council's permanent member states should double their efforts and apply various pressures on Israel to make it accept the return of the Palestinian deportees to their homeland and kinfolk. This is because the deportee issue is as an insurmountable obstacle to the resumption of peace negotiations.

In its capacity as the major sponsor of the peace process, the U.S. Administration is responsible for saving this peace opportunity and removing any obstacle which Israel places before peace.

In order for the negotiations to resume on their set date in April, the U.S. Administration should do its utmost so that Israel will comply with Resolution 799 without trickery, procrastination, or circumvention. This is because Israel's disavowal of this resolution may encourage it to disavow Resolutions 242 and 338—the very bases of the peace negotiations.

Paper Condemns New York Blast, Views 'Real' Terrorism

JN0703125093 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 7 Mar 93
pp 1, 17

[Editorial: "Terrorism Is To Accuse Us of Terrorism!"]

[Text] The United States does not allow any country, leader, newspaper, or writer to accuse it of terrorism or racism or to denounce its adoption of various standards in dealing with many similar issues. The United States does not allow this even if it launches aggression against a country, imposes a blockade on another country, or abducts a leader or dispatches someone to assassinate him with a bullet or by poisoning his food. Nevertheless, the U.S. politicians, media men, propaganda people, and various organs do not hesitate to accuse an entire nation of terrorism if a desperate, angry, or even insane individual of that nation carries out a terrorist act or an action that does not conform to laws and rules. Moreover, the United States, with all these politicians, media men, and propaganda people, is not at all embarrassed to pin the terrorism label on Islam if even a single Muslim goes mad and commits murder or perpetrates explosions or abductions for many reasons, not simply because he is a Muslim. The United States, with all these tools, does the same thing if an Arab commits a wrongdoing or

becomes desperate enough to carry out an action that no sound man would undertake.

We say this because the indictment of a Jordanian citizen for a terrorist action against a commercial center in New York has whetted the appetite of the United States and the West, which are rancorously leveling various accusations and giving various labels to and descriptions of Arabs and Muslims. It is as if Arabs and Muslims are doing an injustice to others, usurping their homelands, bombing their cities, imposing a blockade on them, and trampling on international legitimacy when the matter concerns their own interests.

Real terrorism is not the mere blowing up of a building. Our condemnation of such terrorist actions—out of religious, moral, and humanitarian considerations—does not mean that we will remain silent toward the terrorism that blows up homelands, kills nations and peoples, and commits crimes of annihilation of which we, the victims, feel ashamed. We hope that the day will come when the perpetrators of these crimes will also feel shame.

We are against terrorism because it is an expression of weakness. We are also against terrorism committed by individuals because it is an expression of despair and cannot be checked with supervision, investigations, jails, and news media. Terrorism can only be checked by removing its causes, including injustice, contempt, and disregard of the dignity of man and his nation.

We are also against the terrorism pursued by states which try to depict it as having the criteria of legitimacy, the free world, and the civilized West. There are scores of vivid, sad examples of this terrorism. Accordingly, we can only condemn the terrorist action committed by a Muslim Arab Jordanian if the indictment is confirmed. This condemnation, however, does not prevent us from denouncing any voice which attempts to pin the terrorism label on Arab Jordanians and Muslims. Real terrorism is attempting to undermine our ability to resist injustice by an announcement on our part welcoming this injustice, expressing readiness to coexist with it, and even lauding it!

Foreign Minister Confers With Visiting German Official

JN0703190293 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1700
GMT 7 Mar 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Kamil Abu-Jabir conferred with visiting head of the Middle East Department at the German Foreign Ministry (Harfig Butler) on Jordanian-German ties. They also discussed the Middle East peace process and other regional and international issues of mutual interest.

Dr. (Butler) said after the meeting that relations between the two countries were excellent, and stressed Jordan's

role as a major party to the Arab-Israeli peace talks. He said Germany would continue to support Jordan's political and economic stability.

The German official said there was a lot that could be done to encourage Jordanian exports to Germany and pointed to the prospects of increasing agricultural and tourist cooperation between the two countries.

Authorities Intervene To End Iraqi Sit-In at UNHCR

JN0603070493 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 6 Mar 93 p 3

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Amman—A group of 18 Iraqi refugees Thursday ended a sit-in at the offices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) after intervention from the local authorities, officials said Friday.

The group, which included women and children, launched the protest action Monday demanding immediate resettlement abroad by UNHCR, saying they felt "insecure" in continuing to stay in Jordan.

The Iraqis, all of whom have been granted refugee status by UNHCR, say they are political dissidents opposed to the Iraqi government.

There was no immediate means to verify the authenticity of the claims.

The group began the sit-in Monday, the same day when the strict enforcement of a Jordanian residency law went into effect.

Under the law, all foreign residents in the country—except those who have valid work or residence permits—have to register themselves with police.

The refugees argued against registering themselves with police, saying they did not want to let their whereabouts be known to anyone.

In the meantime, they also complained that their applications for political asylum abroad were pending since several months and accused UNHCR of unfair treatment and feet-dragging.

Janvier Reidmatten, chief of the UNHCR mission here, rejected the accusation and pointed out that the U.N. agency had done its part in processing the applications and forwarding them to potential host governments—mostly in Scandinavia.

"It is up to the host governments to act on the applications and UNHCR could do very little in this regard," said Mr. Reidmatten, adding that "it is becoming extremely difficult these days for European countries to accept refugees."

"We are doing what we can but there are strict limitations to our role," he told the Jordan Times. "They (the sit-in protesters) are not the only ones seeking refuge abroad."

The sit-in ended after the U.N. agency sought intervention from the local security authorities.

The nature of the intervention was not immediately known, but police officials held "negotiations" with the group for several hours Thursday afternoon.

The group was no longer present outside the UNHCR building Friday morning, and U.N. officials said the refugees had moved to hotels.

Nearly 5,000 Iraqis have approached the UNHCR office in Amman seeking refuge abroad since May 1991 when the Iraqi government lifted a travel ban following the end of the Gulf war over Kuwait in March the same year.

About 500 of the applicants have been granted refugee status on a case-by-case basis by UNHCR, and over 350 of them have already left Jordan through arrangements made by the U.N. agency.

Defense Minister Views Amal-Hizballah Fighting
NC0803154093 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1215 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Lebanese Army units have continued their special measures in Beirut's southern suburb in the wake of clashes between the Amal Movement and Hizballah. Army units set up fixed and mobile checkpoints in various parts of the southern suburb and raided a number of centers in search of wanted men and weapons. According to our correspondent, security forces have apprehended 11 of the 18 wanted men.

Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul has stressed that the Army is determined to apprehend all those wanted and put them on trial. He spoke to our correspondent Sa'd Ilyas:

[Begin recording] [Ilyas] Mr. Minister, we would like to ask you about the situation in the southern suburb and whether calm has been restored there.

[Dallul] Calm has been restored to the southern suburb. The Army is in control of the situation. Regarding the incident that occurred yesterday, the Defense Ministry and the military command are determined to apprehend all those who took part in the clashes. Army forces have captured a number of these defendants and are determined to detain the rest. The situation in the suburb is very calm, and Army patrols are operating in the area and reinforcing positions. The situation is calm but that does not mean we will be lenient and forget about detaining those who took part in the incident or pressing charges.

[Ilyas] To whom do the rest of the wanted men belong?

[Dallul] They belong to both parties. We have apprehended 11 individuals, some of them at the checkpoints. There are still five or six wanted men who will be found today. During the Army campaign, 47 people have been detained on charges of involvement in ordinary security incidents. From now on, the Army will detain any groups who take part in clashes and refer them to the court.

[Ilyas] Will you apprehend the rest of the wanted men today?

[Dallul] Contacts are taking place, and every time the security forces detain a wanted man they refer him to us and we do our duty. The Army Command is determined to apprehend all those who took part in this incident.

[Ilyas] Certain members of the Chamber of Deputies called on the government to shoulder its responsibility. Is this a result of past security arrangements, reached through mutual consent, in certain areas?

[Dallul] There is no such thing as security through mutual consent. There has been a peaceful settlement to the situation in Lebanon. We used to initiate mediation efforts to convince the parties in East and West Beirut to allow the Army to deploy in areas. Now that the Army has become a strong force, it has taken over all the

centers that belonged to the government. The Army took over these centers without mutual consent. When clashes occurred between the two parties, Army units intervened and detained the culprits. This did not take place through mutual consent. The Army is exercising its power. There is currently no such thing as security through mutual consent. On the contrary, the Army is in control and does not allow any security setbacks. A security incident took place between two parties in a certain area and the Army acted with competence, courage, and firmness.

[Ilyas] What is your comment on Chamber of Deputies Speaker Birri's statement that the resistance is not a slogan to be used so arms are used indiscriminantly in the villages in southern Lebanon?

[Dallul] We are discussing a specific issue. You asked me about yesterday's incident. Should a security incident occur in an area where the Army is deployed—in the south, Beirut, or anywhere in Lebanon—the Army will act and detain all culprits. I am prepared to answer you on this issue; however, in my capacity as defense minister, I am responsible for the security situation. I do not want to change the subject and answer irrelevant questions. [end recording]

Remaining Suspects Handed Over

NC0903071493 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
0530 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] The Amal Movement and Hizballah last night handed over to the Lebanese Army the remaining wanted gunmen who took part in incidents in the southern suburb three days ago, taking the number of those detained to 18.

The Army intensified security in the suburb and instituted patrols yesterday, raiding centers in search of men involved in the security incident on Saturday. According to reports, the Amal Movement and Hizballah handed over the remaining wanted men.

Al-Hariri Rules Out Citizenship for Palestinians

NC0703072893 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
0530 GMT 7 Mar 93

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has said that Lebanon will not grant citizenship to hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, whom the Israeli occupation authorities must allow to return to their homes.

In a statement published in yesterday's edition of the Kuwaiti newspaper AL-QABAS, Prime Minister al-Hariri said Lebanon is an independent state and that the Israeli tanks that reached Beirut in 1982 were not able to settle the Palestinians in Lebanon.

Al-Hariri Advocates Resistance of Occupation

NC0903075593 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
0530 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri said yesterday that Lebanon has made great strides toward establishing security and political peace. Lebanon, no doubt, still needs strenuous efforts to achieve the economic and social peace to which the Lebanese aspire, the prime minister added. This kind of effort requires all the Lebanese to marshal their potential to rebuild the Lebanese man and work out radical solutions to social problems, including the evacuees issue, he said. When all these solutions are reached, Lebanese unity, Lebanese national existence, peace, accord, and the social march will be guaranteed, Prime Minister al-Hariri maintained.

The prime minister's remarks were made during a banquet to break the fast hosted by the Islamic Orphanage Institutions. Prime Minister al-Hariri said:

[Begin al-Hariri recording] Some of those responsible for past events are trying again to create frustration and raise discouraging slogans. They fear the state's success and fear the people's advance toward national peace. They also fear the experiment that we all conduct with a team spirit. We will never accept this experiment becoming hostage to certain cheap interests.

The government is working to draw up an integrated plan for economic development through the year 2000. This plan will be submitted for discussion soon. Through it, we can establish the future Lebanon. We are on the threshold of a new century and our work must be compatible with development in every area. This has been our sole objective since we assumed responsibility. There can be no patch jobs in a state exhausted by war. There will be only genuine, modern construction to enable Lebanon to progress and young generations to play the role to which they aspire.

Liberation will continue to top our priorities until the Lebanese state regains the last inch of its occupied territory. We will try in every way to achieve this national objective. We will not neglect any move or any endeavor that would force Israel to effect a full and comprehensive withdrawal and implement Resolution 425. We will use our right to defend our land and to support our kin in the south and in western al-Biqā'. We cannot promise the seizure of the weapons used against the occupation, weapons that exercise a legitimate right in defense of the land.

If resisting the occupation is a legitimate right of the Lebanese people, disturbing security is rejected. That is something the state can neither ignore nor accept. [end recording]

Al-Hariri Discusses Deportees Issue, Ramifications

PM0903112793 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
3-9 Mar 93 p 32

[Interview with Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri by unidentified correspondent in Cairo; date not given]

[Text] [AL-MAJALLAH] The Palestinian deportees issue is an international issue and there are many proposals to resolve it. But Lebanon is rejecting any solutions that harms its territory. For how long will the Lebanese Government maintain this position?

[Al-Hariri] Lebanon's position has not changed, nor will it change. They are Palestinians expelled by Israel from an occupied Palestinian territory to Lebanese territory—which is an aggressive action toward Lebanon and an inhumane action against the Palestinians. The action in itself is a clear violation of the fourth Geneva convention and a new instance of aggression on Lebanese territory. And Israel alone must look for a solution for these deportees, since it was the one which expelled them from their territory. And humanitarian establishments must deal with the deportees through Israel alone, not through us. The international community must exert pressure to implement Resolution 799, which obliges Israel to return the Palestinians to their homes.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Will Lebanon respond to the international community's pressures that humanitarian matters should be separated from politics and allow humanitarian aid to pass through to the deportees?

[Al-Hariri] We cannot, under pressure, backtrack on our decision or bargain over our right. If Israel wants to solve the problem, it must allow the deportees to return. And if it wants to deport them to a third country, it must return them to it to submit new appeals. And if these did commit crimes, as Israel claims, why do they not stand trial before its courts? As for deporting them by a military decision, it is a Nazi and fascist action. And Lebanon will not allow participation in this crime, nor will we allow Israel's crime to pass without punishment. This is because if we today accept the hundreds it is refusing to return, it could continue to commit a new crime every day and expel hundreds more. Lebanon rejects half solutions.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Was there coordination among Lebanon, the PLO, and the Arab League over the deportees issue before the Lebanese Government made the decision not to receive them or to allow humanitarian aid to be delivered to them via its territory?

[Al-Hariri] Lebanon made its decision regarding the deportees only after urgent contacts with all the parties concerned with the peace process. Everyone supported Lebanon in its position and in fact demanded that we receive none of the deportees and not allow them to cross Lebanese territory, in order to punish Israel for its crime. The Arab League itself blessed the Lebanese line. Proof

of this is the League's final statement at the Arab foreign ministers' meeting in mid-January. It commended the decision adopted by Lebanon—government and people—for its rejection of the Israeli decision and for demanding that Israel backtrack on its decision immediately. This is because Lebanon did only what serves its interests and the Arab nation's interests and decided to confront all the Israeli conspiracies.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What about the proposed solutions, like setting up a camp in the international forces' zone, in view of the signs of an Israeli-U.S. agreement to compartmentalize [tajzi'at] the solution?

[Al-Hariri] We reject that, because we believe that the emergency forces are closer to the liberated lands than the occupied Lebanese land. And it would have been more proper before that for these forces to allow the Lebanese Army to enter that area on the basis of Resolution 425, which stipulates that they should help the Lebanese Army to extend their authority over it.

[AL-MAJALLAH] There is a disagreement between the Arab League and Lebanon as a result of the Lebanese Government's agreement to [Arab League Secretary General] Dr. 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid's visit to the deportees in Marj al-Zuhur and then the Lebanese Foreign Ministry's backtracking on this visit.

[Al-Hariri] Arab diplomacy understands Lebanon's position and helps it. And there is no disagreement between the Arab League and the Lebanese Government. The coordination exists. The matter—in brief—is that Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid informed some officials in Beirut of his wish to visit Lebanon and inspect the Palestinian deportees in Marj al-Zuhur. When 'Abd-al-Majid announced the news about the visit at a news conference in Cairo there was a great deal of confusion and the Lebanese side officially informed Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid of its apology, proceeding from Lebanon's official position on that issue. We welcome Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid to visit Beirut at any time.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Some people believe that Israel tried to cause divisions in the internal Lebanese position, some believe that it has caused Lebanese-Palestinian disagreements, and others believe that it has indeed succeeded in turning the negotiations issue into a deportees issue. What is your opinion?

[Al-Hariri] Israel banked on the occurrence of divisions in the internal Lebanese position leading to political chaos as a result of the reactions to the deportees issue. But the opposite happened, as the Lebanese united in an unprecedented manner. Israel also aimed to create Lebanese-Palestinian disagreements, but it failed to do so. So coordination exists and is continuing. The 'cordon states' meetings prove this. But Israel is trying to change the foundations of the peace talks by fabricating crises from time to time to negotiate over them with a view to diverting attention from the main issue and playing for time.

Hizballah Reportedly Stockpiles Arms in South

NC0903093893 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 8 Mar 93 p 5

[Text] According to security sources, Hizballah has started to pursue a military policy of stockpiling medium and small-caliber weapons, rockets, and artillery in areas controlled by the UN forces in south Lebanon.

Citing reliable information, the sources noted that Hizballah removed large quantities of weapons from the southern suburb just one day before the Army deployment there. Hizballah, the sources added, stockpiled these weapons in a UN forces-controlled area in the south. The sources said that seven huge trucks were used to carry the weapons.

Fadlallah Says U.S. Wants Israel To Be 'Policeman'

NC0903085093 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] Ayatollah al-Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadallah has answered those who claim they need to relax after being worn out economically, politically, and in the security sense. He said we will not rest, because the American policy wants Israel to continue being the policeman of the region through the peace process. The ayatollah said peace will take the shape of the 17 May Agreement, which restricted Lebanon and defined the Army's positions, planes' sortie routes, and the movement of security forces. He said the peace these people are looking for will not create a liberated south or Lebanon.

Ayatollah Fadlallah asked everyone to look to the future and not delve into the past, because the future will have many gaps and pauses, through which peoples will toil and suffer until they triumph.

Hizballah Source Comments on Israeli Complaint to UN

NC0703090793 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 7 Mar 93

[Text] A Hizballah official source has commented on the Zionist enemy's complaint to the United Nations, accusing Hizballah of terrorism and aggression. The source said: Perhaps this complaint is a new method by the Zionist enemy to divert attention from its acts of aggression. Israel has never abided by UN resolutions; its complaint is ironic, frivolous, and irresponsible. The complaint coincides with fresh Israeli aggression in the south, western al-Biq'a, the West Bank, and Gaza and with the introduction of more and more sophisticated criminal methods in these places. It also comes at a time when we suspect new Zionist plans to escalate aggression and develop the criminal campaign of killings, deportations, and demolitions. This proves that Zionism's arrogant excesses stem from the fact that Israel enjoys total

U.S. approval and support, thus encouraging it to trample UN resolutions and persist in its barbaric acts.

The Hizballah official source continued: The latest U.S. involvement with Israel was in connection with the deportee issue. By lodging a complaint with the United Nations, Israel wants to claim it is exercising self-defense when it carries out war operations. We, on the other hand, know that the enemy is guilty of occupation and continuous aggression against land and people.

Hizballah Commentary Condemns U.S. 'Lies' on Muslims

NC0903102893 *Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic* 0630 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Station commentary: "The American Mercy Bullet"]

[Text] While we confront the U.S.-Zionist fabrications, we must pause to refute the allegations and lies, not because we want to wage a media war of words, but because we must clarify the Muslim image when it is being distorted. We refer to this old, yet new, American craze of pointing the finger at the Muslims over the explosion at the World Trade Center in New York. It is as if only a Muslim is capable of carrying out such an explosion while all other people peacefully and calmly lead their lives and ask God to please protect them. They do not like to see killing and destruction, do not wish to witness scenes of horror mixed with blood, and so on and so forth, all of which are being portrayed as an expression of their humanitarian beliefs. They have cheated groups and individuals to the extent that some Muslims have told tales about them that are more akin to myths and legends.

We have seen people go West and come back deluded by the civilization of animal protection and the values of abandoning [words indistinct] such that they became propaganda vehicles of these Western societies. They told their societies about clean, lit streets, beautiful houses, and huge stores, about the dealings there, respect for others, honesty, safety, and the absence of cheating. All this makes the naive listener conclude that these societies are the only ones with the right to survive. But a glance at the fragmentation and decadence the West is experiencing on every level, something that gnaws at the bones of individuals there—such as the person who shows more affection for his dog than his son or father whose feelings he ignores—reveals the reality. This person has limited his affection to animals and now has nothing to fortify him in his society.

Take it further: When he lost every human sense, he reached a stage where, if he lost his possessions, he thought the whole world was against him. So he must seek his revenge on everyone.

This way, we can focus on American society, which [words indistinct] the Los Angeles events in their true light. These were always camouflaged by glittering headlines. Today, in New York, is this society fortified by

good behavior or have the mafias drowned it in a cesspool of depravity? Does this society exist without contradiction or did the various currents, including the influence of the Jews and others, make the society corrupt and decadent? What about heroin and the youths who do not find a home to shelter them, only streets and alleys? What about the young callgirls and the rape of minors to avoid AIDS, which terrorizes society there?

We have the right to ask about the crazy and shameless residents of New York, its gangsters, nightclubs, and brothels. The answer emerges very clearly that the explosion that rocked it merely expressed its identity. It was not what Clinton wanted: to make allegations and hide behind his fingerpointing at fundamentalism, the terrorism of the Muslims, and the Iran of Islam, which has suffered greatly from American terrorism. The clearest example is the Iranian civilian airbus that was downed by the affectionate American hand in a joke that killed off hundreds of Iranians.

We cannot spend too long on Bush's humanity, or Clinton's, if we start to talk about their help for the starving Somali people, whose hunger has been assuaged by an American invasion that rescued some Somalis from starvation, not with a loaf or dish, but with bullets that were lodged in the heads of the Somalis until you, dear listener, could not hear any moaning, groaning, or call for help.

The American is not a terrorist, even if he kills and annihilates. The Iranian is a terrorist even if he performs the role of angels in prayer and praise. This is the logic prevailing in our filthy age. This reminds us of the story of the gunpowder smuggler, whose goods were discovered by the border guard. When the guard asked the smuggler about his gunpowder, the smuggler insisted it was wheat. When the guard realized the smuggler was insistent, he brought the gunpowder nearer the smuggler's beard and lit it. His beard started to burn while he continued to claim it was wheat, not gunpowder.

It seems there are many examples of our gunpowder smuggler in the U.S. Administration, which has destroyed and terrorized the world, insisting they do not know terrorism and gunpowder, but that they are familiar with wheat through their mercy bullets. No one dare talk about how mean the bullets are because they are the wheat that shuts the hungry mouths in Somalia.

Shells Fall on Kafr Rumman, Abandoned Barracks

NC0903104493 *Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic* 0915 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] At 0830 today, numerous shells fell on the eastern part of Kafr Rumman and on the abandoned Army barracks in al-Nabatiyah from Israeli positions in al-Zaffatah. Large-caliber machine-gun fire accompanied the shelling.

Many shells fell on Kafr Rumman at dawn today causing material damage.

Towns Shelled, Areas Declared 'Military Region'

NC0803085593 *Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic* 0630 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Zionist aggression and oppressive practices against citizens continued in the south yesterday. A Zionist intelligence patrol erected a roadblock in the town of Arnun, near Qal'at al-Shaqif, checking the identities of residents and travelers for two hours. Minutes after the withdrawal of the patrol, enemy artillery shelled the region and the surroundings of Kafr Tibnit.

Earlier, a Zionist force of seven vehicles and about 20 soldiers entered Mazra'at Burghuz, al-Surayrah, and Marj al-Khawkh in Hasbayya district, declaring the towns a military region and barring entry to and departure from them. The south's airspace was the scene of enemy sorties by low-flying aircraft. The occupation artillery also targeted the Iqlim al-Tuffah hills and there was intense raking of the region by machine guns.

The follow-up committee to support the cause of Lebanese prisoners in Israeli jails called on prisoners' families to join a sit-in at the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross next Friday.

Loan Agreement Signed With World Bank

NC0803212693 *Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic* 2000 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Excerpts] A NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY report from Washington says that Lebanese Ambassador in Washington Simon Karam this evening, Beirut time, signed a loan agreement worth \$175 million with the World Bank. The signing ceremony was held at the World Bank building in Washington and was attended by Ambassador Karam and the staffers of the Lebanese Embassy in Washington. The agreement was signed for the World Bank by Vice President (Cue Carkwiser), flanked by a number of aides, some of whom helped secure this loan.

The loan will be used for rebuilding infrastructure, particularly electricity, water, sewage systems, and housing. A total of \$10 million of the loan will be used for rehabilitating the service ministries. The 17-year loan has a low interest rate and a five-year grace period. It is the first loan granted by the World Bank to Lebanon in 20 years. [passage omitted]

Ambassador Karam telephoned President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri this evening to inform them about the loan and the atmosphere of the meeting with the World Bank officials. Official sources in Beirut say the loan is tantamount to a seal of approval for the march of reconstruction and development in Lebanon, as it will open the door for future foreign aid.

PLO's Qaddumi Arrives, Notes Reasons for Visit
JN0903091493 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, accompanied by Muhammad Ghunaym, Fatah Central Committee member, arrived in Damascus last night on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, senior Foreign Ministry officials, and the PLO office director in Damascus received Qaddumi at Damascus International Airport.

In a statement to a SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY correspondent, Qaddumi said he was happy to be in his second dear homeland, Syria. He said that the objective of his visit is to hold talks and consultations with Syrian officials on various developments, particularly after U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to the region, as well as on the deportee issue and future prospects after the new U.S. Administration's assumption of power.

Qaddumi added: The second objective of the visit is to enhance relations with our brothers in Syria, with which we have fateful and pan-Arab links, and also to work together in order to confront the challenges facing the Arab nation in terms of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Libyan Official Arrives, Meets Assembly Speaker
JN0603174393 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 6 Mar 93

[Text] Damascus—People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah today received Bashir Salih, Libyan General People's Congress secretary for foreign relations. Shakir Isa'yyid, chairman of the People's Assembly's Arab and Foreign Affairs Committee, and Humayyid Jallud, director of the Libyan Relations Bureau in Damascus, attended.

Discussion during the meeting touched on relations between Libya's General People's Congress and the People's Assembly, and the need to develop them for the benefit of the two fraternal countries.

Discussion also dealt with the Arab Parliamentary Union's session, scheduled to be held in Damascus in May, and preparations for the 89th international parliamentary conference, scheduled to convene in New Delhi in April.

Salih arrived in Damascus this morning on a visit of several days.

Received by al-Shar'

JN0703192593 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 7 Mar 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' today received Bashir Salih, Libyan General People's Congress secretary for foreign relations, in the presence of Shakir

Is'ayyid, chairman of the People's Assembly's Arab and Foreign Affairs Committee, and Humayyid Jallud, director of the Libyan Relations Bureau in Damascus.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed developments in the region and relations between the two fraternal countries.

Egyptian Paper Interviews Prime Minister

NC0903054893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2147 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo, 8 Mar (MENA)—Syrian Prime Minister Dr. Mahmud al-Zu'bi has said the Damascus Declaration has been and still is the natural Arab answer to what happened in Kuwait. He said the declaration is a serious and sincere Arab attempt to reshape Arab reality and open the door to real Arab solidarity.

In an interview published in tomorrow's edition of AL-AKHBAR, al-Zu'bi explained that the implementation of the declaration has failed to meet the expectations of the Arab masses. He said he hopes the declaration will be implemented soon because it serves Arab interest.

The Syrian prime minister stressed that any partial Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories will not achieve a just and comprehensive peace that secures the return of rights to their legitimate owners. He said cooperation between Egypt and Syria will be reenergized in the coming days. He noted that the coming meeting of the higher joint committee in Cairo will focus on stimulating bilateral trade relations.

Further al-Zu'bi Remarks

JN0903144693 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] Cairo—Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi has asserted that Syria believes in a just and comprehensive peace based on restoring the occupied Arab territories and securing the Palestinian people's legitimate national rights. In an interview published in today's edition of the Egyptian newspaper AL-AKHBAR, al-Zu'bi said that Syria has agreed to the peace initiative because it came in line with UN resolutions, foremost among them being Resolutions 242 and 338. The prime minister also pointed out that Israel's leaders do not seek peace but want to occupy Arab territory and that Israel has not offered anything new to pave the way for peace.

Al-Zu'bi said: Peace is not a question of selling and buying, but of duties and commitments. It is a question of rights that should be completely restored to their owners and it is commitments that should be observed by all parties. He then affirmed that Syria would never relinquish land. The prime minister added: The urgent duties both in Syria and sisterly Egypt are to reach a real and effective Arab solidarity defining our common denominators as one Arab nation. He said: We stand against any attempt to damage inter-Arab relations and

we are working to eliminate division and entrench the principle of consultations to reinforce these denominators, to strengthen and rationalize Arab positions, and to serve higher Arab interests in light of the fact that international circumstances have left us no choice but to reinforce the one Arab strength.

The prime minister also affirmed that there is no alternative to serious, joint Arab action and real economic integration, adding that there is no path for the Arabs other than unifying their word. He emphasized that the prospering Syrian-Egyptian relations are the backbone of this required Arab solidarity.

Regarding Syrian-Lebanese relations, al-Zu'bi said: These relations are more than brotherly, and we are trying to realize all that is required by the Lebanese Government to help it spread legitimacy all over Lebanese territory. We also agree to everything the brothers in Lebanon want, and Syria will extend as much aid as possible in all areas.

The prime minister also said: We are now waging the battle of peace, and we have to coordinate our position with the Arab brothers so as to adopt a unified position. He added: The difficult circumstances and the great challenges facing the Arab nation make Arab solidarity based on the unity of fate, cooperation, and coordination a vital necessity for the nation to continue and confront the challenges threatening its entity and existence.

Al-Zu'bi also pointed out that Arab solidarity is the only way to overcome the difficult circumstances facing our nation. He said: If Arab solidarity is a pressing necessity for the Arabs and higher Arab interests, this necessity becomes more pressing when these challenges threaten our national entity, our existence, and our entire fate.

Regarding Syrian-Egyptian relations, the prime minister said: Syria and Egypt are moving toward integration in all areas—an experience which has become an example for inter-Arab relations as a result of the belief of President Hafiz al-Asad and President Muhammad Husni Mubarak in the Arab nation's unity and common fate. Syrian-Egyptian relations, he added, are strategic, serve Arab solidarity, and protect the Arab nation from any dangers threatening it. He also said that the directives President al-Asad and President Mubarak give every time they meet show that they are moving as quickly as possible to promote relations between the two countries and reinforce the mutual interests of the Arab people in both fraternal countries.

Concluding, al-Zu'bi stressed to the newspaper AL-AKHBAR the importance of promoting economic and trade ties between Syria and Egypt in light of the deep, distinguished, and special relations between the two countries.

Ba'th Party Official Delivers Anniversary Address

JN0803122993 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Address by Ba'th Party Assistant Secretary General 'Abdallah al-Ahmar on behalf of Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad at a rally held by the Ba'th Party Damascus Branch at Damascus University auditorium on the 30th anniversary of the 8 March Revolution—live]

[Excerpts] Comrades, brothers, sisters, and masses of our nation throughout the vast Arab homeland: We all celebrate today with our steadfast people in the Syrian Arab Republic, and the masses of our militant Arab nation throughout the vast Arab homeland an anniversary that our hearts cherish and which is a source of pride for each one of us—the 30th anniversary of the glorious 8 March Revolution, the revolution of the party and the people in militant Arab Syria.

On this glorious occasion, it gives me pleasure to address you on behalf of the president symbol, struggler President Hafiz al-Asad [applause], secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and president of the Syrian Arab Republic, and to convey to you his sincerest and warmest congratulations on this blessed anniversary and his best wishes to all the sons of our people and nation for further success and progress on the road to the attainment of our pan-Arab objectives. [passage omitted]

Comrades, brothers and sisters, all this cohesive edifice has made modern Syria, Hafiz al-Asad's Syria, a developed Arab country which experiences the concerns of the Arab nation in the same measure it experiences its own concerns. The 8 March Revolution, which is in line with the Ba'th Party's ideology and the resolutions adopted by its congresses, is a pan-Arab revolution in every sense of the word. It is a revolution for all Arabs. Its pan-Arab meanings are substantiated in its ideology, practices, and all its actions.

The primary guideline of the party and the revolution has been and continues to be the objective of Arab unity. The dangers the Arabs are now facing and the tasks that are awaiting them in the sphere of construction and progress reaffirm more than ever the importance of Arab unity.

Within the framework of persistent work for unity as an optimal objective, the revolution focused on enhancing pan-Arab awareness, keeping the objective of unity alive in the hearts and consciences, and establishing effective Arab solidarity and unity of Arab action on the basis of the supreme pan-Arab interest, which is the common denominator for all Arabs. The revolution also seeks to create an atmosphere for the attainment of any possible unity measure between any two Arab countries on the road to the realization of the major objective, that of comprehensive unity.

O comrades, Syria dealt with the Arab-Israeli conflict and all its ramifications in all stages with unwavering principles. Accordingly, it dealt with the circumstances, realities, and developments of every stage flexibly and dynamically in order to benefit from all circumstances and opportunities in serving and accomplishing the principled constants without retreat, hesitation, relinquishment, or bargaining over any of them.

Since the October war, the revolution has given its utmost attention to achieving the first short-term objective of pan-Arab struggle represented in regaining the Arab territories occupied in 1967 and the Palestinian Arab people's legitimate rights on the basis of international legitimacy and resolutions. Appropriate international circumstances have recently been made available and the international community showed more interest than before in achieving peace in the Middle East. A new opportunity to achieve this objective loomed on the horizon. Syria's response to the U.S. initiative and its participation in the Madrid conference and the peace negotiations held after the conference have launched the peace process, which is based on international legitimacy and its resolutions, particularly UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and the principle of land for peace, in a manner that will eventually lead to Israel's complete withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories and the guaranteeing of the Palestinian Arab people's legitimate rights with the aim of realizing a just and comprehensive peace based on the implementation of the relevant UN resolutions.

Proceeding from our faith in Arab rights and our commitment to the pan-Arab constants, any subsequent dealing or evaluation of the developments of the peace process will be based on the extent this process abides by the pillars on which it was based and by the clear principles from which it was launched. There will not be any relinquishment of our rights, which were recognized by international legitimacy and confirmed by a long march of contemporary Arab struggle. The realization of full peace, which is our target, and which enjoys our full attention, will continue to hinge upon the implementation of a comprehensive Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. Although the peace process has not achieved any progress worth mentioning during the past eight rounds, the developments of this process have proven to the entire world Israel's intransigent stand that opposes peace and refuses to implement the relevant UN resolutions, particularly Resolutions 242, 338, 425 on Lebanon, and 799 on the deportees. They have also proven its intransigence and escalation of its repressive measures as well as its adoption of a terrorist deportation policy which has recently included more than 400 Palestinian Arabs who were expelled from their homeland, thus violating human rights and international charters. Israel has also defied UN Security Council Resolution 799, which called for the immediate and secure return of all deportees to their homeland and families.

Arab Syria, which stands firmly at the side of the Palestinian Arab people and their heroic intifadah and at the side of national Lebanese resistance against the Israeli occupation of part of southern Lebanon, and constitutes the depth and base for our people in the Syrian Golan who are holding out against the Israeli occupation, stresses that the Arab citizens' struggle against the occupation forces in the Golan Heights, south Lebanon, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip is a legitimate right acknowledged by human rights conventions and all international charters. This struggle is even the national duty for everyone whose land is occupied and whose rights are usurped. There is no salvation for our nation's sons except through the liberation of the land and the restoration of rights from the occupiers.

Reaffirming its desire to continue the peace process to achieve the objective of establishing a just, comprehensive peace, Syria believes that Israel's refusal so far to implement Resolution 799 will not help overcome the obstacles that Israel created through its mass deportation of Palestinian Arab citizens. Failure to find a solution to the deportee issue will obstruct and threaten the basis of the peace process as a whole. Syria stresses the need for the immediate and full return of the deportees through the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 799. This is because this resolution, as well as other resolutions issued by the UN Security Council, are not subject to bargaining and compromises. Binding as they are, these resolutions must be implemented according to the same yardstick. Implementation of this resolution will facilitate the resumption of the negotiations and the peace process to achieve the objective on which it is based.

In this context, we are puzzled as to the Western media circles' deliberate distortion of the Arab struggle in general and Palestinian struggle in particular against the Israeli occupation. Nor can we understand the allegation that this resistance to the occupation is violence and terrorism. Such allegations are a distortion and reversal of facts and encourage the aggressor. We declare our rejection of the policy of appeasing the aggressor and applying double standards with respect to the implementation of international resolutions. This policy is adopted by influential UN member states, at a time when these states in particular have a special responsibility toward the implementation of all UN Security Council Resolutions in accordance with the same yardstick.

Comrades, esteemed audience, all events and developments have affirmed the soundness of the pan-Arab course of the March Revolution in the era of the Corrective Movement, be it with regard to the Lebanese crisis, the Iraq-Iran war, or the Gulf crisis. Syria's responsible pan-Arab role has helped save Lebanon and its people from the furnace of a crisis which could have destroyed the future of this fraternal country. This stand has helped Lebanon end the civil war and proceed along the path of national accord, entrenching security, and restoring control to the legitimate authority. This stand has also

helped Lebanon achieve stability, embark on reconstruction, and begin work to liberate the occupied part in southern Lebanon. Syria has also adopted a sound position on the Iraq-Iran war, the Iraqi regime's occupation of Kuwait and the disasters caused to Iraq, Kuwait, and the Arab situation as a whole, and the subsequent events. This sound stand, which is based on pan-Arab interests, is capable of exploring the reality and essence of developments and of dealing with these developments in a principled and realistic manner.

The Iraqi regime's practices targeting the Arab nation's unity and interests and the destructive effects of the Gulf war should not make us deviate from our principled stand on maintaining Iraq's unity and sovereignty and rejecting any attempt which would lead to fragmenting this fraternal country. Nor should this make us deviate from our principled stand toward the Iraqi people, who are bearing the major portion of the suffering resulting from the Iraqi regime's behavior and practices. Everything possible should be done to end the Iraqi people's growing suffering as the current state of affairs in the country continues.

Comrades, brothers and sisters, the continuation of the sanctions and pressures on the Libyan Jamhriyah signals an obvious Western insistence on creating a crisis with this fraternal country, at a time when the Libyan Jamahiriya shows desire for and response to tackling the Lockerbie crisis between it and the three Western nations. Syria firmly supports all the measures and stands taken by the Jamahiriya to resolve this problem and terminate the sanctions that have been imposed on it, as these sanctions were unjustifiable in the first place.

The Western media campaign against the Arabs and Muslims everywhere, in addition to many official stands by some Western countries, indicate that they believe that human rights are confined only to the Jews. For example, they do not see what has happened and what is happening to the human rights of Arabs under Israeli occupation, nor what is happening to the Muslim people of Bosnia. Nor do they examine the terrorist Israeli practices against Arab citizens in the occupied territories and how Israel, through these practices, is daily violating Arab rights, using the ugliest forms of repression, oppression, and systematic terrorism. Moreover, they claim that the resistance operations against the occupier are terrorist operations. Turning a blind eye to facts will only lead to increasing extremism in the entire region. Only the termination of the occupation and restoring rights to their rightful owners will put an end to extremism and provide the appropriate circumstances for the return of stability and peace to the region.

The Arabs should hold on to their rights and avoid any bargains with anybody. If they are to restore their rights and territories, and if they really want to gain the support of other states and international organizations to put an end to the occupation, injustice, domination, and aggression, the Arabs should bolster their solidarity and unify their stands and adhere to their legitimate rights.

Syria will continue to work seriously and relentlessly to bolster effective Arab solidarity and create a new Arab state of affairs which will help the Arabs attain their objectives, restore their rights, and defend their existence and future in the face of injustice, control, and hegemony. [passage omitted]

NPF Central Committee Discusses Political Developments

JN0603165493 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1615 GMT 6 Mar 93

[Excerpt] The Central Command of the National Progressive Front [NPF] held a meeting at 1200 today under Dr. Muhammad Zuhayr Mashariqah, vice president and NPF vice chairman.

The Central Command listened to a comprehensive political report, presented by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', on current political conditions and the active moves Syria is making to fortify the Arab situation and bring about effective Arab solidarity, capable of dealing with the new world conditions to preserve Arab rights and achieve a just and comprehensive peace, based on the principles of international legitimacy and UN resolutions.

The Central Command discussed the latest political developments and the phase through which the Arab nation is now passing, particularly with regard to Arab solidarity and the peace talks. The Central Command stressed the importance of these talks and the need to see them through to their natural end; namely, to establish a just and comprehensive peace in accordance with the bases and standards approved by the world community which are based on the return of legitimate Arab rights, Israel's withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, and the implementation of pertinent UN resolutions.

The Central Command valued highly the wise and courageous policy followed by Syria under President Hafiz al-Asad. The Central Command said this policy truly and sincerely expresses the Arab nation's supreme national interests and confirms the principled pragmatism which adheres to national and pan-Arab principles. [passage omitted]

Paper Reports Israeli Plans on Golan Withdrawal

JN0903102293 Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 2 Mar 93 pp 1, 11

[Text] Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has again rejected total withdrawal from the occupied Golan and the dismantling of the Israeli settlements there.

Radio Israel cited Rabin as saying that Israel is doing its best to avoid returning the entire Golan to Syria and demolishing the settlements on it.

Rabin was addressing the annual conference of presidents of American Jewish organizations convening in occupied Jerusalem.

Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres last Saturday spoke about a partial withdrawal from the Golan that Israel could carry out in the middle of this year.

In this respect, the Israeli paper 'AL-HAMISHMAR cites Likud deputy leader Binyamin Netanyahu as saying that the Israeli Government has drawn up a plan to withdraw from the Golan in stages. He explained that in the first stage Israel will return four villages on the Golan and the Israeli Army will withdraw to the promontories line, maintaining control over the inlets to the military establishments in that sector. Six Israeli settlements will later be removed and U.S. forces will be deployed in the area. Netanyahu said that total withdrawal will take place only after a period of five to seven years, during which time the U.S. forces will act as buffer forces.

On the other hand, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin in a statement to the Israeli paper HATSOFE yesterday, said that there can be no peace in the Middle East if the Golan, the West Bank, and the Gaza Strip are kept under occupation.

In a statement on Israeli radio, Beilin reaffirmed his government's rejection of withdrawal from occupied Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley. He said that Jerusalem is a red line and we will not give up Jerusalem, the Jordan Valley, or the Gush Etzyon settlement as stipulated in the Labor Party's political platform.

Egyptian President Husni Mubarak emphasized the need to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on the principle of the exchange of land for peace, the implementation of the UN resolutions, and the acknowledgement of the Palestinian people's right to an independent state.

In an interview with the weekly Egyptian magazine MAYU published yesterday, Mubarak said his meeting with U.S. President Clinton during his forthcoming visit to the United States had been set for 6 April. He said that

during the visit, he will meet with U.S. political and economic figures as well as with members of Congress.

Meanwhile, Faysal al-Husayni, head of the advisory committee to the Palestinian delegation which is participating in the peace talks, said yesterday that Christopher's visit to the Middle East achieved several things, the most important of which is the United States agreeing to ask Israel to comply with the international resolutions, including Resolution 799 on the return of the deportees, and that Israel would not deport more Palestinians in the future.

In an interview with the Voice of the Arabs yesterday, al-Husayni said that U.S. President Bill Clinton had sent him a letter affirming the U.S. commitment to the peace process.

From his part, Ghassan al-Khatib, member of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, said that members of the delegation toured Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank yesterday. In a statement to AFP, al-Khatib said that he and three other members toured the settlements to view the situation on the ground.

Al-Khatib said that the building of settlements around the so-called green line is aimed at obliterating this line. He noted that the roads that are being opened to serve the settlements are as much a threat as the settlements themselves. He explained that the members of the delegation did not meet any of the settlers during the tour.

The tour, which took place with the participation of a Palestinian expert on settlements, included settlements around Jerusalem and in the northern part of the West Bank near the so-called green line.

On the other hand, a Palestinian delegation under Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] arrived in Moscow yesterday for talks with Russian officials. Abu-Mazin will also deliver a message from Yasir 'Arafat to the Russian leaders.

Afghanistan

Further on Peace Agreement Reached in Islamabad

'Text' of Accord

BK0803134393 Karachi DAWN in English 8 Mar 93
p 7

[Text] The following is the text Afghan Peace Accord signed by eight Afghan Mojahedin parties at Islamabad on Sunday morning after six days of intensive talks:

Given our submission to the will of Allah Almighty and commitment to seeking guidance from the Holy Quran and Sunnah:

Recalling the glorious success of the epic Jihad waged by the valiant Afghan people against foreign occupation;

Desirous of ensuring that the fruits of this glorious Jihad bring peace, progress and prosperity for the Afghan people;

Having agreed to bringing armed hostilities to an end;

Recognising the need for a broad-based Islamic government in which all parties and groups representing all segments of Muslim Afghan society are represented so that the process of political transition can be advanced in an atmosphere of peace, harmony and stability;

Committed to the preservation of unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan;

Recognising the urgency of rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan and of facilitating the return of all Afghan refugees;

Committed to promoting peace and security in the region;

Responding to the call of Khadim al-Hermain al-Sharifain His Majesty King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz to resolve the differences among Afghan brothers through a peaceful dialogue;

Appreciating the constructive role of good offices of Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of Islamic Republic of Pakistan and his sincere efforts to promote peace and conciliation in Afghanistan;

Recognising the positive support for those efforts extended by the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran who have sent their special Envoys for the conciliation talks in Islamabad;

Having undertaken intensive intra-Afghan consultations separately and jointly to consolidate the gains of the glorious Jihad;

All the Parties and Groups concerned have agreed as follows:

i) Formation of a Government for a period of 18 months in which President Borhanoddin Rabbani would remain president and Eng. Golboddin Hekmatyar or his nominee would assume the office of Prime Minister. The powers of the President and Prime Minister and his cabinet which have been formulated through mutual consultations will form part of this Accord and be annexed;

ii) The Cabinet shall be formed by the Prime Minister in consultations with the President, and leaders of Mojahedin Parties within two weeks of the signing of this Accord.

iii) The following electoral process is agreed for implementation in a period of not more than 18 months with effect from December 29, 1992:

a) The immediate formation of an independent Election Commission by all parties with full powers;

b) The Election Commission shall be mandated to hold elections for a Grand Constituent Assembly within 8 months from the date of signature of this Accord;

c) The duly elected Grand Constituent Assembly shall formulate a Constitution under which general elections for the President and the Parliament shall be held within the prescribed period of 18 months mentioned above;

iv) A Defence Council comprising two members from each party will be set up to, inter alia;

a) Enable the formation of a national army;

b) Take possession of heavy weapons from all parties and sources which may be removed from Kabul and other cities and kept out of range to ensure the security of the capital;

c) Ensure that all roads in Afghanistan are kept open for normal use;

d) Ensure that operational control of the armed forces shall be with the Defence Council.

v) There shall be immediate and unconditional release of all Afghan detainees held by the Government and different parties during the armed hostilities.

vi) All public and private buildings, residential areas and properties occupied by different armed groups during the hostilities shall be returned to their original owners. Effective steps shall be taken to facilitate the return of displaced persons to their respective homes and locations.

vii) An All Party Committee shall be constituted to supervise control over the monetary system and currency regulations to keep it in conformity with existing Afghan banking laws and regulations.

viii) A Committee shall be constituted to supervise the distribution of food, fuel and essential commodities in Kabul city.

ix) A ceasefire shall come into force with immediate effect. After the formation of the Cabinet, there shall be permanent cessation of hostilities.

x) A Joint Commission comprising representatives of the OIC [Islamic Conference Organization] and of all Afghan Parties shall be formed to monitor the ceasefire and cessation of hostilities.

In confirmation of the above Accord, the following have affixed their signature hereunder on Sunday the March 7, 1993 in Islamabad, Pakistan.

Prof Borhanoddin Rabbani, Jami'at-e-Eslami President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, Engr Golboddin Hekmatyar Hezb-e-Eslami, Mulvi Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi Harakat-e-Enqilab-e-Eslami, Prof Sebghatollah Mojaddedi Jabha-e-Nijat-e-Milli, Pir Syed Ahmed Gaylani Mahaz-e-Milli, Engineer Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai Ettehad-e-Eslami, Sheikh Asif Mohseni Harakat-e-Eslami and Ayatollah Fazil Hezb-e-Wahdat-e-Eslami.

Preamble

The President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan is the head of the State and symbol of unity and solidarity of the country and shall guide the affairs of the state in accordance with Islamic laws and the principles laid down in the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

I. The Prime Minister shall form the Cabinet in consultation with the President and present the same to the president who shall formally announce the Cabinet and take its oath. The Cabinet shall operate as a team under the leadership of the Prime Minister and shall work on the principle of collective responsibility.

II. The Prime Minister and the Cabinet shall regularly act in close consultation with the President on all important issues.

III. The President and the Prime Minister shall act in consultation with each other and shall try to resolve differences, if any, through mutual discussion. In case any issue remains unresolved it should be decided by a reference to a joint meeting of the President and the Cabinet.

IV. All major policy decisions shall be made in the Cabinet, to be presided over by the Prime Minister, Minister, Deputy Ministers and Ministers of State would be individually and collectively responsible for the decisions of the government.

V. The formal appointment of the Chiefs of the Armed Forces shall be made in accordance with the existing practice and after mutual consultation.

Powers of the President:

VI. The President shall have the following powers and duties:

a) Appointment of the Vice-President of Islamic State of Afghanistan b) Appointment and retirement of judges of the Supreme Court, the Chief Justices, in consultation with the prime minister and in accordance with the provisions of the laws. c) Supreme Command of the Armed Forces of the country in the light of the Objectives and structure of the Armed Forces of Afghanistan. d) Declaring war and peace on the advice of the Cabinet or the Parliament. e) Convening and inaugurating the Parliament according to Rules. f) Consolidating national unity and upholding the independence, neutrality and the Islamic character of Afghanistan and the interests of all its citizens. g) Commuting and pardoning of sentences according to the Shariah and the provisions of law. h) Accrediting heads of Afghanistan's diplomatic missions in foreign states, appointing Afghanistan's permanent representatives to international organisations according to the normal diplomatic procedures and accepting the letters of credence of foreign diplomatic representatives. i) Signing laws and ordinances, and granting credentials for the conclusions and signing of international treaties in accordance with the provisions of the law. j) The President may at his discretion, delegate any of his powers to the Vice-President, or to the Prime Minister. In the event of the death or resignation of the President, the presidential functions shall be automatically entrusted to the Vice-president, who shall deputise till the new President is elected under the Constitution. l) Granting formal permission to print money. m) The President may call an extraordinary meeting of the Cabinet on issues of vital national significance which do not fall in the routine governance of the country.

Powers of the Prime Minister:

VI. The Prime Minister and his Cabinet shall have the following duties and powers: a) Formulation and implementation of the country's domestic and foreign policies in accordance with the provisions and spirit of this Accord and the provisions of law. b) Administering, coordinating and supervising the affairs of the ministries, and other departments and public bodies and institutions. c) Rendering executive and administrative decisions in accordance with laws and supervising their implementation. d) Drafting of laws and formulating rules and regulations. e) Preparing and controlling the state budget and adopting measures to mobilise resources to reconstruct the economy and establish a viable and stable monetary, financial and fiscal system. f) Drafting and supervising implementation of the socio-economic and education plans of the country with a view to establishing a self-reliant Islamic Welfare State. g) Protecting and promoting the objectives and interests of Afghanistan in the world community and discussing and negotiating foreign treaties, protocols, international agreements and financial arrangements. h) Adopting measures to ensure public order, peace, security and Islamic morality and to ensure administration of justice through an independent and impartial judiciary.

In confirmation of the above Accord, the following have affixed their signatures hereunder, on Sunday the March 7, 1993 in Islamabad, Pakistan

Prof Borhanoddin Rabbani Jamiat-e Islami President of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, Engr Golboddin Hekmatyar Hezb-e Islami, Maulvi Mohammad Nabi Mohammadi Harakat-e-Enqelab-e-Eslami, Prof Sebghatollah Mojadeddi Jabha-e-Nijat-e Milli, Pir [names illegible] Engineer Ahmad Shah Ahmadsai Ettihad-e-Eslami, Sheikh Asif Mohseni Harakat-e-Eslami and Ayatollah Fazil Hezb-e-Wahdat-e- Eslami.

President Hints at Dostam Role

BK0803144393 Islamabad THE NATION in English
8 Mar 93 pp 1, 4

[Text] Lahore—Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani has said the "aggrieved forces" in the Afghanistan accord would be "accommodated" when the agreement is practically implemented after the solution of all remaining points of conflict.

He was talking to THE NATION at the Presidency on Sunday night hours after signing the historic agreement. Stopping short of a commitment to include Gen Rashid Dostam in a political settlement said, "We are successful in our efforts for conciliation with Engineer Hekmatyar. We will making to do the same with the other." [sentence as published]

On the equation of power between the President and the Prime Minister, he said this was among the issues which were yet to be finalised further negotiations.

Asked whether the dispute between the Government and the Hezb-e Islami over the defence ministry would threaten peace in Afghanistan in the future the Afghan President [word indistinct] his support for the (?retention) of the ministry by his party's leader Ahmad Shah Mas'ud. He said peace would be different without Ahmed Shah, but assured that "If any one has any reservations on the matter, they would be allayed.

"He has a strong and organised (?team) and sidelining would be unfavourable for prospects of peace," he said, maintaining that this should not be made a difficult problem as the ultimate aim of the [word indistinct] was to achieve peace, "The cooperation of all parties is essential for a permanent solution," he said.

On the reorganisation of the Army in Afghanistan, he maintained that the national Army would (?consist of) the Mojahedin "Any group opting for service would have to fulfil certain conditions before its application would be accepted," he added. Rabbani said those wishing to join would have to be Mojahedin and besides skills their moral character would also be in question.

He also expressed his keenness to work for better relations with the Muslim republics of Central Asia, saying the feelings of Muslim brotherhood were alive in the Afghans.

He said the credit for the successful ratification of the peace agreement went to among others General Hameed Gol, [names indistinct] Aimer and Mehmood Mehdi.

PPI [PAKISTAN PRESS INTERNATIONAL] adds in their latest remarks on the occasion, the Afghan leaders warmly thanked Pakistan for its role in the conclusion of the peace accord. Prof Borhannodin Rabbani said that for generations the Afghans will remember whatever Pakistan has done for them.

Engineer Golboddin Hekmatyar thanked all concerned and hoped that everyone will abide by the accord in letter and spirit.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Sebghatollah Mojadeddi expressed the hope that steps would be taken to ensure that the new government was really broad-based and truly representative of all factions of the Afghan people.

The Chief of Hezb-e Islami Afghanistan, Engineer Golboddin Hekmatyar has said: "We are happy with the Islamabad accord and are confident that it will help usher in an era of peace and prosperity in war-torn Afghanistan.

He stated this while giving an informal reaction to the Pakistani as well as the foreign media who almost surrounded him to seeking his reaction.

Asked about the Defence Minister, Hekmatyar said: "It is my duty to appoint a Defence Minister and I will do this in consultations with the President".

Asked whether he will take the reigns himself as Prime Minister or will give his nominee for the office, he said: This question besides other relevant questions would be answered in detail by me if I found time to hold a Press conference here."

He however said that a commission will monitor the affairs of the Defence Ministry till the formation of the Cabinet within 15 days.

Meanwhile, Amir Jama'at-i-Islami Senator Qazi Hussain Ahmad on Sunday welcomed the agreement reached among Afghan Mojahedin leaders and appreciated the optimism that it will usher in an era of peace and prosperity in the region.

Giving his reaction to a group of newsmen here at this resident Sunday afternoon the Jama'at Amir said the agreement will bring a durable peace to Afghanistan destroyed by the Russian invasion.

Qazi Hussain appealed to Iran, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to implement the accord in letter and spirit ensuring peace in the country.

He also called upon all the Afghan leaders to jointly run the interim set up till the formation of a new parliament in accordance with the agreement.

He said the existing small army in Afghanistan is a challenge for the new leadership of Afghanistan. He

suggested that heavy weapons should be handed over to newly-formed central army. He also suggested that at present all the heavy weapons should be removed from the cities and be taken away from Kabul to a specific place in order that Kabul could not be the battlefield.

He said that people in Kabul will have a sigh of relief adding that Afghanis will reap the fruit of jihad which has changed the map of the world.

Defense Minister Remains in Post

LD0803173593 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, talked to reporters today on the accord signed yesterday between the Islamic state and the jihadi parties.

Esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani said: The peace accord between the Islamic State and the jihadi parties which was signed as a result of yesterday's talks and the understanding that was reached is an important step toward restoring peace and resolving our country's present problems. Under the agreement, a permanent cease-fire has come into effect and the participation of all jihadi parties in the forthcoming government is being explained and specified. It has been decided that under this accord a commission, made up of representatives of Islamic Conference Organization member countries, will supervise the cease-fire.

In reply to another question, the esteemed president of Afghanistan said: With the signing of this accord, a new page has been opened in relations between the Islamic State and the Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party]. We hope the other side will respond to the Islamic State's goodwill by displaying harmony with patience and forbearance and will ensure the requisite cooperation with the state so that bitter memories created by the fighting are eliminated and are replaced with goodwill, understanding, and cordiality.

Answering another question, esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani said: Under the peace accord, the new cabinet will be formed very soon in consultation with the president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan and with his approval. Thus far the state's minister of defense remains in his post and no decision has been made about him nor has this issue been discussed.

The esteemed president also said the commission that has been formed will supervise the cease-fire and is assigned to retrieve heavy weapons from various sides under the accord.

Esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani said: The signing of this accord and the implementation of its resolutions will enable the parties to be active in the Islamic State so that they can build their country. We hope the agreement will make it possible to resolve our problems.

Hekmatyar Accepts Post

BK0803155593 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Agency reports say that Golboddin Hekmatyar has agreed to be the prime minister of Afghanistan after a unanimous decision of the Central Executive Committee of Hezb-e Eslami which met in Islamabad today.

The prime minister-designate of Afghanistan has said that we sincerely intend to implement the peace agreement reached in Islamabad. He made it clear that no one is now against the agreement as it enjoys the support of the majority of the Afghan people and political groups. Hekmatyar rejected the apprehension that there will be any crisis on the issue of nominating a new defense minister. He said that the agreement clearly states that only one member each of a political party will have an important post. He said that he will appoint his cabinet after consultation with the president and other Afghan leaders. Hekmatyar said that Afghan leaders will arrive in Kabul within a day or two and will start resolving issues in view of the recent developments. When asked about the future of Najibollah, he said that it will be decided by the cabinet.

Party Leader on Ministry's Future

LD0803174593 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Esteemed Professor Abdorrah Rasul Sayaf, leader of Etehad-e Eslami party, spoke to a BAKHTAR correspondent about the agreement which was signed yesterday between the president of Afghanistan and jihadi leaders. He said:

[Begin Sayaf recording in Dari] Our main aim is the (?restoration) of peace, tranquillity, and prosperity to our people within the fold of Islam [words indistinct]. We fully (?support) any agreement which results in the restoration of peace, the establishment of a 100 percent Islamic government, and a (?leadership) all of whose members are [word indistinct] and free Muslims and are [word indistinct] to the nation and the people. [passage indistinct]

Of course, in the agreement which has been reached in Islamabad and which envisions Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani as head of state and Engineer Hekmatyar as prime minister, no mention is made of the Defense Ministry. That ministry remains as it is because the Ministry of Defense is a part of the cabinet and discussion about the (?formation) of the cabinet will take place in Kabul.

What has been decided about the Military Commission is that it has specific tasks and authority and it is not an alternative to and does not take place of the Ministry of Defense. [remainder of item indistinct] [end recording]

'Intense Clashes' Reported in Kabul Districts

LD0903115593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 6 Mar 93

[Text] Despite the signing of a peace accord between Afghan opposition leaders in Islamabad, fighting between government forces and opposition parties continues in the west and south of Kabul city.

According to our correspondent in Kabul, intense clashes between government forces and the Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami which began last night around the central grain depot and in the Ghaniabad, Karta-e Sakhi, Deh-Mazang, and Dasht-e Barchi districts of west Kabul, continued until morning and the two sides attacked each other's positions with a variety of heavy weapons.

As a result of these clashes, dozens of artillery shells and missiles have hit residential areas in west Kabul, causing enormous material losses. The two sides accuse each other of having started the clashes.

In the Chehel-Sutun region too, government forces and Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami are fighting each other. Fighting is still going on at noon. According to this report, the positions of the government forces on the hill on which is situated the television center have been subjected to heavy arms fire from the forces of Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami.

Our correspondent's report also says that during the past few days there have been clashes between the forces of General Dostum and government forces at Kabul's airport, leading to one government aircraft's being damaged. These clashes began when government forces prevented an aircraft from landing in Kabul on the pretext of opposing the relocation of the Hezb-e Wahdat forces to Kabul. In consequence of this, Dostum's forces fired at the military plane carrying General Hamid Gul, who was intending to fly to Peshawar, as a result of which several people were wounded. Government forces and the paramilitary forces of Gen. Dostum each possess military aircraft and are in control of different parts of Kabul airport.

Passenger flights continue as normal but military flights are not possible for either side.

Bangladesh

Parliament Continues Discussion on President's Speech

BK0803141993 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1230 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Parliament continued discussions today on the president's speech on the inaugural day of the current session. During the discussions, ruling party MP's dwelled on the achievements of the government in different spheres while the opposition MP's criticized the government. So far nine MP's have taken part in the

discussions. Of them, three were from the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party [BNP], five from the Awami League [AL], while one MP belonged to the Jamaat-i-Islami.

When the parliament session resumed this afternoon with Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali in the chair, AL MP Dr. Kazi Abul Yusuf initiated discussions on the president's speech. He criticized the government for a lack of consistency between its words and actions. Yusuf added that the law and order situation in the country has severely deteriorated. Another AL MP, Sheikh Fazlul Karim, Salim in his discussions alleged that the president tried to hide the failures of the government. He said the economy is on the verge of ruin due to the wrong administrative policy of the government. Salim also emphasized the need to resolve all political and other disputes with India and Pakistan.

BNP MP Major Akhtaruzzaman, retired, said that the president's speech delineated the path for establishing peace, progress, and prosperity in the country. Recalling the failures of the then Awami League government after the country's independence, he questioned why the then government failed to live up to the expectations of the people and also asked why Sheikh Mujib [then president] became unpopular in such a short period of time.

AL MP Motia Chowdhury alleged that dependence on foreign assistance is hindering the path of self-reliance. She further said that administrative mismanagement and corruption is impeding the development of the industrial sector.

Participating in the discussion, BNP MP Ataur Rahman Khan said that the export earnings of the country have sharply increased and there has been a record rice production during the term of the present government.

Jamaat-i-Islami MP Hafeza Asma Khatun called for forging closer relations between the ruling and opposition parties in the greater interests of the nation.

AL MP Abdul Khaleq Talukdar dwelled on the problems of his constituency and demanded speedy measures for the resolution of these problems.

BNP MP Salahuddin called on the opposition MPs not to criticize the government for the sake of criticism.

Economic Council Approves Revised 5-Year Plan

BK0703162793 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 7 Mar 93

[Text] The National Economic Council meeting in Dhaka today approved the revised fourth five-year plan [FFYP] 1990-95 with an outlay of 62,000 crore taka. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia was in the chair. The revised fourth five-year plan, with a 10 percent cut in the original, allocates 34,700 crore taka to the public sector for investment and 27,300 crore taka to the private

sector. The original FFYP size was 68,930 crore taka. The meeting also approved the strategy of implementation of the plan.

The revised plan focuses on ensuring the basic food of dal-bhat—rice and lentils—for all, human resources development, better implementation of family planning program to keep in check population growth, and greater involvement of women in the mainstream of national economic development efforts. The revision seeks to reflect the government's political commitment in the five-year economic development plan by incorporating its pledge to ensure all-round development of the country as envisaged in the 19-point socioeconomic program of Shahid [martyr] President Ziaur Rahman.

The prime minister, inaugurating the meeting, gave emphasis on gearing up the private and public sector initiatives to achieve the targets set by the revised plan. She said it is an imperative to increase investments in rural areas with the objective of rapidly creating new employment opportunities and growth. The programs of canal excavation, afforestation, vegetable and food production, pisciculture, poultry farming, and women's socioeconomic development will be given priority to support and generate self-employment opportunities. Describing the 21st century only seven years away, as essentially of development, the prime minister said that the fourth plan has been prepared in a manner so that it provided the nation with the needed launching pad to approach the coming century better. In a climate of shrinking foreign assistance prospects in the new global order, Bangladesh must proceed with a new strategy to achieve the goal of speedy self-reliance.

Troops To Participate in UN Operation in Mozambique

BK0703155293 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in English 1530 GMT 7 Mar 93

[Text] Bangladesh is to have a major participatory role in the UN peacekeeping operation in Mozambique. The Foreign Office in Dhaka said UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali has formally requested the Bangladesh Government to make available additional troops to the United Nations peacekeeping operation in Mozambique.

India

Steps To Restore Normalcy in Kashmir Considered

BK0903100693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] Center is considering to take a series of measures to speed up the process of restoring normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir. A three-pronged strategy is being worked out keeping an open mind for parleys with militant groups. These include intensifying border vigil and initiating sweeping changes in the state administration.

This was stated by the minister of state for home affairs, Mr. Rajesh Pilot, while talking to newsmen on board a special aircraft from Gauhati to New Delhi on Sunday. According to PTI [PRESS TRUST OF INDIA], the center will resort to a pragmatic approach during its discussions with the militants. Mr. Pilot said the need of the hour is for the misguided youths to give up violence, return to the mainstream, and help the state administration in normalizing the situation. The minister said the government will consult leaders of various political parties to embark on a joint approach to bring about an amicable solution in Kashmir. He asserted that Pakistan has been told in clear terms to stop aiding, abetting, and training militants in the border states.

Arrested Men Say Pakistani Boys Fighting in Kashmir

BK0603051093 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1615 GMT 5 Mar 93

[Text] Two Pakistanis who were recently arrested in Jammu and Kashmir while infiltrating the border have said the local population in the state faces no atrocities from the army. The Pakistani-trained militants said they felt there was no religious discrimination against them while in custody.

[Begin recording] [Zulfiqar Ali Shah speaking in Urdu] My name is Zulfiqar Ali Shah and I belong to the Islamic Revolutionary Front which is a Pakistani organization. People belonging to this organization previously used to work and fight in Afghanistan. All Pakistani boys used to work for them in Afghanistan. Now they are motivating those boys to infiltrate into Jammu and Kashmir which is inside India. The Muslims living in the villages told me that they have all kinds of facilities there. Medicine is distributed freely even in remote areas. The Army supplies them with medicine. Besides that, all other facilities are available to them and they do not face any kind of difficulty. In fact, they say, the Pakistani Government has caused difficulties for us. They send boys from inside Pakistan and ask them to indulge in shootings, and thus they create problems for us.

[Unidentified person speaking in Urdu] I am quite okay and am leading a good life here. There is no religious restriction against anyone here. We have a lot of facilities here. We also observe Ramadan fasting here. We, including our other companions and Hindus and Sikhs, all live together and we do not have any problem. [end recording]

Militants in Kashmir had recently abducted one Syed Zulfiqar Ali from (Bathua) village of Badgam District. His dead body was later found abandoned. The incident invoked deep resentment among the villagers and they took out a procession, shouting slogans against militancy.

Congress-I Rejects Controversial Resolution on Punjab

BK0803152993 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] The Congress-I has rejected the controversial Anandpur Sahib resolution on Punjab adopted by the Akali Dal 20 years back. Addressing a party conference at Anandpur Sahib on the occasion of Hola Mohalla [Punjabi festival] today, the Punjab Congress-I president, Mr. Beant Singh, said that the resolution smells of separatism and it is not for the welfare of Sikhs living outside Punjab. He said the resolution was against the spirit of Punjabis who fought valiantly for the country's unity and integrity. The Congress-I, at its first political conference held at the festival after a gap of 13 years, passed another resolution appreciating the efforts of the Beant Singh government to bring peace to Punjab.

Criticizing the Akalis for working for narrow political gains, Mr. Beant Singh said that they have weakened Punjab by demanding its division in the form of Punjabi subah [state]. He said the present government will give priority to make the state stronger economically and politically. The chief minister said there will be no interference in the religious affairs of the Sikhs, but reaffirmed the state government's determination to keep gurdwaras [Sikh temples] clear of militants using them as hideouts. He said Anandpur Sahib will be kept as a holy city and no liquor vends [shops] will be allowed there from next month.

Defense Budget Receives 'Marginal Increase'

BK0803152393 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 28 Feb 93 p 1

[Text] New Delhi, Feb 27—For the next year's Defence Budget, there is a marginal increase in real terms.

The Defence outlay has been increased by Rs. [rupees] 1,680 crore for 1993-94. The increase from Rs. 17,500 crore in the current year to Rs. 19,180 crore reflects a 9.6 per cent rise.

In real terms, it makes an increase of just 2 per cent to cover for rise in inflation.

The components of the 1993-94 defence outlay are: Army (Rs. 9,425.46 crore), Navy (Rs. 1,125.42 crore), Air Force (Rs. 3,064.49 crore), Ordinance factories (Rs. 65.10 crore), and capital outlay on all these services (Rs. 5,499.53 crore).

In the next year's budget, 13 paise of each rupee spent will go to defence sector.

Interestingly, while there has been a decline of Rs. 209 crore in defence capital expenditure for 1992-93, the revenue expenditure of defence has gone up by the same amount. Thus the budget estimates and the revised estimates for defence in 1992-93 remain perfectly matched.

If one takes into account the current rate of inflation at 7 per cent, the increase in Defence expenditure for 1993-94 in real terms would be just above 2 per cent. But if one takes into account annual average double-digit inflation rate, the Defence allocation in real terms should have marginally come down, instead of going up.

The Army always gets major share of the Defence budget in view of the bulk of manpower compared to the Navy and Air Force. For the next year, the Budget for the Army has been raised by 7 per cent from Rs. 8,772.97 crore to Rs. 9,425.46 crore, an increase of Rs. 653 crore.

For the first time, the Air Force gets a major rise of about 20 per cent, with the Budget being raised to Rs. 3,064.49 crore from the current year's revised budgetary estimates of Rs. 2,532.99 crore—an increase by about Rs. 531.50 crore.

Such a big increase in the Air Force share is because of the higher costs of equipment in this technology intensive force. A major expenditure lies ahead for the Air Force as it plans to induct an advance trainer jet. The Air Force has been allocated an additional Rs. 1,615.77 crore for capital outlay on aircraft and aero-engines.

The Navy has been given a 13 per cent rise in its budgetary allocation of Rs. 1,125.92 crore as compared to the current year's revised estimates of Rs. 994.34 crore—an increase of Rs. 131.7 crore.

In view of the modernisation of communication, electronic warfare, and acquisition of self-propelled 155 mm guns, the Army has been allocated an additional allocation of Rs. 1,261.35 crore for purchase of equipment under the capital outlay head.

An outlay of Rs. 65.10 crore has been earmarked under the expenditure head and Rs. 231 crore for capital outlay for the Defence ordinance factories.

Another major expenditure head under the defence budget is the outlay of Rs. 2,379 crore for defence pensions. A major factor for the rise in Defence pensions's money is one-time increase to pre-January 1, 1986, Defence pensioners.

Minister Denies Budget Dictated by World Bank

BK0803030693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] The finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, has expressed satisfaction over the fall in prices of essential commodities, tractors, farm implements, and inputs. Speaking to newsmen at Bangalore, Mr. Singh hoped that farmers will get a larger share of consumer spending. The finance minister said that the center did not resort to further increase in the income tax limit for the salary classes as it would have had a bad effect on the states.

He denied the charge that World Bank has dictated the budget.

The finance minister said the country has a sound balance of payments position, its resources are up, inflation is controlled, development spending is more and expenditure on poverty alleviation program has increased.

Ministry Says Investment Climate Unaffected by Ayodhya

BK0703161093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 7 Mar 93

[Text] The private sector has offered to invest more than 196,000 crore rupees in a wide-range of fields, including computer software. Confirming this, the Industry Ministry sources in New Delhi said 8,170 memoranda of investment have been filed with the government. The official sources asserted that the investment climate has not been affected by the Ayodhya developments. The foreign investment approvals in January amounted to 8.2 billion rupees, about 5 billion rupees more than the approvals for the previous month. Reports available with the Industry Ministry show that Maharashtra continues to top the industrial chart with 1,300 new proposals, followed by Gujarat with 1,140 and Uttar Pradesh [with] 1,085 proposals. Both Indian and foreign investors are again showing interest in Punjab and have offered to set up nearly 600 new ventures.

Commentary Views Economic Cooperation With Sri Lanka

BK0903035593 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Commentary by journalist M.K. Tikku]

[Text] The two-day meeting of the Indo-Sri Lanka Joint Business Council, which opened in Colombo yesterday, is as good an indicator as any of the growing scope of the economic relations between the two countries. The 15-member Indian delegation comprising representatives of trade and industry will along with its Sri Lankan counterpart seek to identify fresh areas of economic cooperation. This is the second meeting of the joint business council, the first one having been held in New Delhi last year.

The council was set up under the aegis of the Joint Commission for Cooperation while the Joint Commission itself was conceived under the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Agreement of 1987. Initially, it took a while before the Joint Commission could be got off the ground. But, once the air was cleared of all the misunderstandings that seem to hang between New Delhi and Colombo, it did not take the Joint Commission long to appreciate that a forum had to be created to promote interaction between trade and industry of the two countries.

In fact, such a mechanism was an essential corollary of the regime of the liberalized economic policies. For this week's meetings in Colombo, light engineering industry has been identified as a major thrust area. Sri Lanka

needs to import a number of light engineering items, especially in the automobile industry which it finds could be highly competitive, if imported from India. Alongside, India will assist it in setting up ancillary units for producing some of the items locally. Sri Lanka has also been feeling somewhat uneasy about its balance of payment growing adversely with India. Colombo appreciates that this is partly inevitable since it will always have more to import from India than it can possibly export. Even so, it feels that the adverse balance could partly be corrected, if India were to invest more in joint ventures in Sri Lanka apart from buying more of its traditional exports such as rubber and spices.

Indian entrepreneurs have already undertaken some joint ventures in such areas as textile, tire manufacture, and the management of tea gardens. But, there certainly is scope for doing more. For years, Sri Lanka has been importing apples from Tasmania and stationary items from Europe. It is only in the last couple of years that Colombo has begun to appreciate that it can buy most of these items at much cheaper rates from India, which is also its closest neighbor. The fact that Sri Lanka is the current chairman of the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] has also made it more responsive to opportunities of greater economic cooperation within the South Asian region itself. This certainly has given a new fillip to the trade winds now blowing across the Palk Strait.

Iran

Statement Condemns 'Allegations' on NY Bomb

LD0803220693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] U.S. allegations against Muslim fundamentalists regarding the explosion at the World Trade Center has caused a harsh reaction among Islamic circles in western countries.

The International Muslim Institute of Canada has published a statement on the issue expressing astonishment at the baseless and spiteful allegations aimed at the Muslim community of America, IRIB reports from Paris.

The statement said with the aid of its propaganda leverage, the new U.S. Administration is trying to portray Muslims and Islam as the new enemy of the American people and to replace anticommunism with anti-Islamism.

Referring to the hasty remarks of Bill Clinton on American television shortly after the arrest by the FBI of

Muhammad Salamah, a New Jersey Muslim, the statement said the remarks by the U.S. President are outside the judicial context and contradict the American Constitution.

Pointing to the unfair allegations made against certain Islamic countries and Islamic circles in America, the statement calls on the U.S. Senate to establish a commission to carry out an investigation in parallel with the propaganda commotion created by the American press and mass media in condemning Islamic groups, because there are many unclarified points regarding the explosion at the World Trade Center, which U.S. officials are failing to address.

One of these points concerns the details of an Israeli woman suspected of cooperation with the intelligence services of the Zionist regime, and whose details have been given to the FBI by the auto rental service which leased the vehicle used in the explosion, the statement added.

Regarding the role of this woman, who has been named as Josy Adams, an FBI spokesman has said: We have no idea if she is a Mosad member, and even if we did, we would not announce it.

Student Rally Protests Serbian Crimes in Bosnia

LD0803191093 Tehran IRNA in English 1840 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Tehran, March 8, IRNA—Tehran University students held a rally in front of the United Nations office here today in protest to the Serbian crimes against Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

They made a bonfire of the flags of Israel, Serbia and the U.S., and said Iranian basijis (volunteers) are ready to go to Bosnia to protect their Muslim brothers and sisters from the savage Serbs.

"The time for expressing regret is over. World Muslims should now form an international mobilization force to defend the territorial integrity and honour of world Muslims," said the resolution issued by the students.

It condemned international forums and the European Community for their ominous silence vis-a-vis the genocide of European native Muslims.

The students dismissed as a "subterfuge" the United Nations promise to try Serb war criminals and demanded the setting up of an actual tribunal to bring the Serb criminals to justice.

They deplored indifference of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) towards the issue even after the expiry of its January 15 deadline, and said that the OIC silence indicates ominous designs by the west to change Bosnia into another Palestine.

The resolution also criticized the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the World Health

Organization (WHO) for their incompetency in delivering emergency supplies to the war-stricken Bosnian people.

Disciplinary forces ringed the UN bureau during the peaceful rally even [as received] order to avoid any untoward incident.

Armenians Refute 'False' UN Human Rights Charges

LD0603153493 Tehran IRNA in English 1410 GMT 6 Mar 93

[Text] Tehran, March 6, IRNA—In a letter to the U.N. Bureau here Saturday [6 March], an association representing Armenians of Tehran denied "false" claims raised by foreign media and U.N. human rights envoy Galindo Pohl that the rights of religious minorities were infringed in the Islamic Republic.

"It is an undeniable fact that in Iran Armenians are not subjected to any type of oppression, but rather they are free to establish institutes for promotion of their religious and cultural affairs," the National and Cultural Association of Armenians said in the letter.

The letter said that the National and Cultural Association of Armenians established after the victory of 1979 Islamic revolution is operating freely whereas during the former regime it was impossible for Armenian community to set up such organizations.

The association called on the U.N. bureau chief in Tehran to avoid releasing such "false reports" in compliance with the U.N. Charter and in order to respect the rights of the Iranian people.

Over the past few days, the U.N. Bureau received similar letters from other minority groups living in Iran which denied allegations of minority rights violations in Iran.

Visit by Turkey's Cetin to Azerbaijan Viewed

LD0703221393 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 7 Mar 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin has arrived in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, on a one day visit. It is said that the main topic of discussion of Mr. Cetin with the Azeri officials will be to explore the ways for terminating the Armenia-Azerbaijan dispute over the Karabakh region.

Some informed circles believe that the Turkish foreign minister's Baku visit is taking place within the joint Turkish-Russian efforts aimed at terminating the Karabakh conflict over which an agreement was reached during last week's trip of Cetin to Moscow. [passage omitted]

Apparently Ankara is endeavoring by pursuing an active diplomacy to make best endeavors for having access to

an initiative to resolve the Karabakh issue thus enabling the adoption of practical steps towards stabilizing and bolstering its own position and influence in these republics.

Some political analysts believe that Ankara in a bid to realize such objectives is trying, through the backing of Western states, to persuade the leaders of the newly independent republic of the former Soviet Union to follow the model of Turkey's lay government. Of course in view of the fact of growth of Islamic tendency in Central Asia and Caucasus, is the common concern of Russia and Turkey, these two countries are inclined to preserve their cooperation in those regions at a desired level in this regard. Moreover, the Turkish statesmen too are cognizant of the fact that despite the disintegration of the Soviet empire, the Russians are still desirous of regaining their past influence in Central Asia and Caucasus. On this basis Ankara has no alternative but to boost the domain of its activities in those regions through coordination with Russia, besides strengthening its own foot-hold there. Apart from these cases, naturally, Mr. Cetin, during his meeting with Azeri officials has sought to hold talks on the type of cooperation between Turkey and Armenia and the existing misunderstanding between Ankara and Baku on this issue. The reason is that the sale of wheat and electrical power by Turkey to Armenia and also Ankara's consent to the passage of Western aids to that Republic, have led to a strong criticism of Turkey by the Azeri officials. [passage omitted]

In general, based on the efforts which have been made by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe for terminating the war in Karabakh, there is optimism that with the efforts of all the states involved with this issue, including Turkey and Russia, the abortive five-year war in Karabakh will come to a speedy end.

Paper Criticizes Turkey's 'New Salman Rushdie'

LD0803150393 Tehran IRNA in English 1444 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Athens, March 8, IRNA—A Saudi newspaper has described the translator of the blasphemous work 'THE SATANIC VERSES' into Turkish as a "new Salman Rushdie." Leftist Turkish writer Aziz Nesin has translated 'THE SATANIC VERSES' and is waiting permission from the government for its publication.

Weekly paper AL-MUSLIMUN, published in London, in a recent issue said Nesin, 78, in a television interview attacked Islam as a "system that stifles freedom" and defended the apostate Salman Rushdie.

Observers in Turkey were questioning Nesin's motives of choosing the timing (9 February) to announce his plans to publish the work, just after the killing of a secular Turkish journalist, Ugur Mumcu, wrote the paper. It said Nesin's statements were aimed at stirring the feelings of the Muslims to drive them to react.

Some observers think that other circles are behind the plan to damage the image of Islamists. If Nesin was killed they would create a public uproar and put the blame on Islamists, AL-MUSLIMUN said.

Last month Nesin aroused the wrath of the Turkish people by saying that "Turkish people are fools." "Sixty per cent of our people are idiots, therefore the whole society is idiotic," he said in the interview published in Arab daily AL-HAYAH.

Deputies on Transport Minister's Interpellation

NC0903160993 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 25 Feb 93 pp 1, 3

[Text] In an exclusive interview with ABRAR, four Majles deputies discussed the reasons for the interpellation of the roads and transport minister. They cited a lack of intensive planning, and a lack of supervision and follow up on the performance of various departments as the main reasons for the interpellation.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Naderi, the Bo'in Zahra deputy, expressed his appreciation for the actions of the Roads and Transportation Minister Sa'idi-Kia during the imposed war, but said: This interpellation is directed against weak management by the minister. The interpellation of the roads and transportation minister by 40 Majles deputies is a direct result of the heart-rending tragedies that have occurred around the country.

The lack of attention to the reconstruction of the Abhar Highway, the Takestan Fork, and the Avaj Pass, among others incidents, indicates incompetence and weak management on the part of the roads and transportation minister.

Dr. Zare', the Shiraz deputy, said: The country's roads are not in a satisfactory condition. For example, Fars Province, which is ranked first in wheat production and animal husbandry, is considered a deprived area due to the condition of its roads. Its southern railroad, which is extremely strategic, is still only in the planning stage after many years.

The accidents that have occurred in the past few years have undermined the credibility of the roads and transportation system, which is not to the ultimate benefit of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Stressing the importance of the country's infrastructure in resolving the country's problems, Dr. Zare' said: The Roads and Transportation Ministry should pay special attention to highways considered part of our national wealth.

Orumiyeh Deputy Ja'fari noted problems with air and land transport, saying: The interpellation of the roads and transportation minister and the follow up on the recent accidents is an attempt to prevent more accidents.

He also talked about problems with transportation in Azerbaijan. He said detailed studies have not yet been

completed on the Martyr Kalantari Expressway, which links east and west Azerbaijan by way of Orumiyeh Lake, and the borders in this area are not very easy to control because of the lack of proper highways.

He also said: The Majles' supervisory role should be revived on principle. In the event of any shortcomings by a ministry, legal action should be taken.

Dr. Raja'i-Khorasani, the Tehran deputy, said: If these kinds of accidents took place in any country, the minister concerned would certainly be interpellated.

He also said: Correct management in ministries has an impact on the fate of the people, making it essential.

Petroleum Minister on Oil Industry Performance

LD0803120493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] The performance of Iran's oil industry during the five-year plan has exceeded the plan's earlier forecasts. Petroleum Minister Aqazadeh-Kho'i said in an interview with reporters today that the level of oil production and the productivity of the national oil company's investment budget in the years 1368-1371 [21 March 1989 to 20 March 1993] has, on average, exceeded the five-year plan's forecasts by 5.7 percent.

In connection with the implementation of petrochemical projects, the petroleum minister said: Of the 10 important petrochemical projects planned during the five-year plan, four projects—in Mahshahr, Shiraz, Bandar Imam, and Esfahan—are now operational, and the production of petrochemical substances has shown an average growth of 57 percent per year, increasing from 884,000 tonnes in the plan's first year to 5,392,000 tonnes in 1371, and the export of petrochemical substances has increased from 28.6 million dollars in 1368 to 130 million dollars in 1370.

The petroleum minister stressed that emphasis is being given to the petrochemical industry in the first five-year plan, and he said the construction of complementary [takmili] units in petrochemical industries and using private investment in these industries will be among the priorities of the second five-year plan. In this connection, initial steps are already being taken, through the establishment of the petrochemical investment company, to begin transferring shares in petrochemical units to the people.

With regard to the performance of Iran's national gas company, Mr. Aqazadeh-Kho'i said that during the five-year plan, 2,350 kilometers of main gas pipelines and 14,000 kilometers of gas branch lines have been laid in the country and 900,000 new residential and commercial services have become operational in the country.

The petroleum minister added that natural gas consumption has shown an average increase of over 22 percent during the past four years and the share of natural gas in

providing the country's hydrocarbon energy currently stands at 31.6 percent. The petroleum minister concluded by saying the following about gas pipeline projects in Tehran: If 600 billion rials of banking credit is made available in 1372, the task of supplying gas to the entire city of Tehran, except for the bazaar area, and the task of supplying gas to five of the country's cities will be completed.

Lists Oil Industry Achievements

LD0803153893 Tehran IRNA in English 1513 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Tehran, March 8, IRNA—Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i today listed Iran's production capacity of four million million barrels of oil per day and five million [mn] tons of petrochemicals as among the achievements of his ministry since the start of the first 5-year development plan in March 1989.

"The production of petrochemicals nationwide climbed from 884,000 tons in 1989 to 5.39 million tons in 1992, registering an annual growth rate of 57 percent," Aqazadeh-Kho'i told a press conference.

He also said that in the first four years of the development plan, city gas facilities were provided for 840,000 new subscribers throughout the country.

In the said period, Aqazadeh-Kho'i said, 2.66 million tons of petrochemicals worth dlr 292 million were exported abroad.

Of the 10 petrochemical projects now under construction, four have started operation and the rest are to go on stream next calendar year starting March 1993, he added.

On the drilling and oil exploration activities of his ministry, the minister said 385,000 meters were drilled and seismographical operations conducted in an area of 84,000 square kms in the first four years of the plan.

He pointed out that the first exploratory well drilled in the Caspian Sea at a depth of 5,094 meters proved the existence of hydrocarbons.

Some 27 new fields with potential oil and gas reserves were also explored in the Persian Gulf, the oil minister told reporters.

He put the actual production capacity of the country at sea and on land at 450,000 and 3.8 million bpd [barrels per day] respectively and said the combined figure is expected to rise to 4.5 million bpd.

According to the latest figures, Aqazadeh-Kho'i said, Iran's oil and gas reserves stood at 92 billion barrels of oil and 20 trillion cubic meters of gas.

Iran currently produces 3.34 mn barrels of crude in accordance with the quotas fixed by the OPEC ministers' meet in Vienna last month.

DPK Central Committee Plenum Issues Statement

NC0803094093 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian
Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 7 Mar 93

[Statement by the Democratic Party of Kordestan Central Committee on the committee's fifth plenum issued on 2 March—read by announcer]

[Text] Respectable compatriots, combatant people of Kordestan, cadres, peshmerga, and members of the Democratic Party of Kordestan [DPK]: The fifth plenum of the DPK Central Committee was held on Saturday and Sunday, 1 and 2 Esfand [20 and 21 February]. During the plenum, a general report was tendered by DPK Secretary General combatant comrade Mostafa Hejri.

The report's political section was devoted to an analysis of Iran's political, economic, and social situation. After discussion, the plenum concluded that the party should step up activities in every field of struggle.

Another section of the report concentrated on the party's relations. The plenum was briefed on these and connected activities and discussed why party activities to form a democratic progressive front have not yielded results. It was proposed that with there being no chance of forming a united front of opposition forces, their cooperation must be strengthened to be better used to struggle against the regime and to create more favorable grounds to form a united front in future. After deliberation, participants approved this section of the report.

The report's last section concentrated on discussing those who had deviated from the party. The plenum concluded that, considering the situation in the region and the general interests of the Kurdish people in this sensitive phase, a unilateral cease-fire should be declared. Naturally, if party cadres and peshmerga become targets of an armed attack by any group, they will have the right to unconditionally defend themselves. On this, the DPK has shown it can resist assailants.

[Signed] The DPK Central Committee

[Date] 11 Esfand 1371 [2 March 1993]

Guardian Council Approves Bills

LD0703175793 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of
Iran First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 7
Mar 93

[Excerpt] The Guardian Council accepted in its Sunday [7 March] meeting that the bills that it had earlier referred back to the Majles, which in turn revised them, were now in accordance with religious canons and the Constitution. This includes the following: the bill on the protocol for the amendment of the Izmir Treaty; the bill on the protocol on the protection of the marine environment from pollution sources outside the sea; the bill on the duties and responsibilities of the head of the judiciary; and the members' bill for omitting Article 149

from the internal regulations of the Majles and adding four other articles to it. [passage omitted]

Commercial Agreements With PRC, Qatar Ratified

LD0903122493 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of
Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 9
Mar 93

[Excerpts] At today's open session of the Majles, seven bills were debated and passed. According to our correspondent, the bill on the commercial agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Government of Qatar and the bill endorsing the constitution and memorandum of reciprocity of the 13th Congress of the International Communications Union, signed in Nice, France, were passed by the deputies. [passage omitted]

The bill on the commercial agreement between the the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Government of the People's Republic of China was also on the agenda of today's open session and was ratified. [passage omitted]

Pakistan**Sources Believe CIA Murder Suspect in India**

BK0903145193 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN
OBSERVER in English 9 Mar 93 pp 1,4

[Text] Islamabad—International espionage operates in shadowy, often mysterious ways to poison friendly relations between two sides. The leaders get caught in circles of conflict they could never foresee in their wildest dreams. The splashes from Washington that rippled after fatal shooting outside the CIA headquarters are well-planned exercise by US-based anti-Pakistan plotters who wished Islamabad to be placed on the list of terrorists states. The fiery-eyed take the Clinton's torch to Islamabad on the wish of anti-Pak plotters.

Aimal Kanshi, the alleged killer of CIA men is being tracked in and outside Pakistan like a hunted animal. Jewish and Indian lobby have taken it upon themselves to exploit the issue, so they could settle their scores with Islamabad. Information gathered by this scribe revealed that Kanshi is known for his pro-Indian attitude. His hatred against Pakistan was evident through his speeches he used to make at Balochistan University. Well-groomed and speaking fairly good English, Kanshi is learnt to have been trapped by Indian agencies which used him against his own homeland. Kanshi is being sought in an international manhunt for the killing of two and wounding three. All but one were CIA employees.

Kanshi who left Pakistan for America in February, 1991 had to spend very miserable time in Washington. He slept most of the times on floor as he had nowhere to go and no one to meet. He later turned to the Pakistani communities in US for help. He during his stay in Washington was seen moving with Indian nationals,

some of whom helped him a lot. He worked briefly at ACE Movers, a company owned by a Pakistani and Indian.

He used to abuse Pakistani rulers blaming them for all that has gone wrong. Kansi, who obtained masters degree in English from Balochistan University, was an active worker of a militant national movement in Balochistan. It is learnt that Kansi loves to hate Pakistan and pleads for Indian hegemony in the region. Kansi considered heroes all those whom Pakistan government declared anti-state elements. He during his stay in Quetta also developed relations with Indian diplomats who used to meet him at various diplomatic get together. The sources say that the causes which prompted Kansi to kill CIA officials in Virginia (US) were still a mystery to investigating teams. Some symptoms convinced them that Kansi is currently somewhere in India. The Indian agencies didn't want him to be arrested by US officials. Sources say that Washington will soon approach New Delhi to find out the whereabouts of Kansi who has disappeared from the scene after the killing incident.

'Muslim Baiting' Media Campaign in U.S. Protested

BK0703103193 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN
OBSERVER in English 7 Mar 93 p 6

[Editorial: "Muslim Baiting in U.S."]

[Text] For some time the Jewish lobby in America has been vilifying Muslims living in America as fundamentalists and as such guilty of a number of crimes against the American way of life. They have collaborated with India in accusing Pakistan of posing a danger to world peace by its nuclear programme. The huge explosion in the building of New York's World Trade Centre, the biggest blast of its kind in America, has now been pinned on to a Muslim, and the newspaper reports on this subject have named other accomplices of Muhammad Salameh, the main accused. Long before the first hearing of the charges against Salameh a vicious media campaign has been launched against Muslim fundamentalism in the US and the impression is being created that all American Muslims constitute a serious threat to America, and that all of them are in one way or another guilty of a variety of crimes against society.

It is a cardinal principle of justice that an accused is considered and treated as innocent till proved guilty beyond all reasonable doubt on irrefutable evidence. Americans pride themselves on strictly adhering to this principle, but when the accused happens to be a Muslim, this principle is conveniently modified and media coverage speaks of the accused as one who has already been convicted. This happened in the case of the Lockerbie plane crash, for which Libya was held responsible on the flimsiest evidence. America is still making the demand that the two accused be handed over to the US to be tried in America. This was also manifest in the way the BCCI [Bank of Credit and Commerce International] officers

were arrested and tried for offences for which every bank officer in the US and Europe could be indicted. The Pakistanis were tried, but it was very obvious that they had not been given a fair trial and upon conviction the court handed down very savage sentences.

Ever since the military action against Iraq, America has been harping upon the dangers of Muslim fundamentalism and making all Muslim countries targets of its animosity. The arrest of Salameh was followed by a spate of accusations against a blind Maulvi Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman who is being described as a second Khomeyni. It is being said that Salameh says his prayers at the mosque where Shakyh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman is the maulvi, suggesting that the blind maulvi and all those who say their prayers at this mosque are involved in dangerous conspiracies against America, and that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], the Palestine terrorist organisation, has its headquarters in America. After all this Muslim baiting can we expect that Salameh or any other Muslim accused of terrorism can get a fair trial in America? Muslim countries should instruct their representatives in Washington to protest against this kind of media campaign against Muslims.

Paper Says U.S. Not Satisfied With Pressler Amendment

BK0903123393 Lahore PAKISTAN in Urdu 5 Mar 93
p 4

[Editorial: "Search for a Tougher Measure To Replace the Pressler Amendment"]

[Text] Dr. (Mitchell B. Reese), U.S. scholar and former national security adviser, addressing a press briefing in Islamabad on the issue of "Nuclear Nonproliferation and the American policy in South Asia" has said that Pakistan has continued its nuclear program despite the Pressler Amendment and it can produce six to 10 atom bombs within a week. (Reese) said that both Pakistan and India are carrying out their nuclear program without any international safeguards and are avoiding the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, adding that this can prove dangerous.

This is not the first time a prominent U.S. figure has rapped Pakistan's nuclear program in reference to the infamous Pressler Amendment. The former Bush administration had suspended economic and military aid to Pakistan on the plea of the Pressler Amendment, and it still remains so. Now the people of the same administration keep rebuking Pakistan, whenever they have a chance, and claiming that Pakistan has become a nuclear power. Pakistan, however, has insisted from the beginning that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes. It has been saying that in order to meet its energy needs, Pakistan needs to increase its power generation which remained inadequate even after fully tapping all conventional energy sources.

So far as the question of signing the nuclear nonproliferation treaty is concerned, Pakistan has never refused to

do so. It has set only one condition; that is, India should sign it first, and Pakistan will then follow without any delay. The U.S. scholar's disclosure that the United States is thinking of seeking a tougher step as the Pressler Amendment proved ineffectual has dashed the fanciful hope that the United States would soften its policy toward Pakistan and resume economic and military aid. Obviously, Pakistan will have to seek alternative resources and take appropriate steps to ensure its existence and progress.

Prime Minister Meets Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister

LD0803170493 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Borujerdi, Iranian deputy foreign minister in charge of Asian-Pacific affairs, met this afternoon with Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for discussions on the recent Afghan developments.

Conveying the greetings of our president and his satisfaction over the recent agreements between the leaders of the Afghan jihadi groups, Borujerdi thanked the Pakistani prime minister for his efforts, IRIB reported from Islamabad.

In the meeting, Nawaz Sharif expressed thanks for the message of the Iranian president, and said cooperation among Iran, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia as well as willingness by the Afghan mujahedin leaders had undoubtedly made the meeting a success.

Afghan President Praises President, Prime Minister

BK0803160893 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani has thanked President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif for their efforts in resolving the complicated issues of Afghanistan and bringing about an agreement among prominent Afghan groups. In his message, he said the president of Pakistan has always adopted a very encouraging posture toward the people of Afghanistan. He expressed confidence that other friendly Islamic countries from time to time will seek guidance from the prudence and statesmanship of Ghulam Ishaq Khan.

In his message to Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, President Rabbani highly appreciated the prime minister's valuable and untiring efforts in uniting all prominent Afghan mujahedin leaders at a conference. The Afghan president praised the Pakistani prime minister for his deep interest in Afghan affairs and success in getting the issue resolved in a dignified manner. He said the people of Afghanistan will always remember his spirit of goodwill toward them.

Missiles, Other Weapons Available in Peshawar

BK0803144593 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN OBSERVER in English 8 Mar 93 p 12

[From Tariq Saeed in Peshawar]

[Text] While the 14 years of internecine [as published] in Afghanistan has left deep impacts on socio-economic and politico-cultural behaviour of Pakistan particularly the Frontier Province, the huge quantity of sophisticated arms supplied to Afghan Mojahedin finding its way back in the local arm's bazar posing serious threat to law and order situation in this part of the country.

The arms ranging from Kalashnikov to US made lethal Stinger missiles are at open sale in Darra Adam Khel 30 kilometer south of Peshawar. Apart from Stinger missiles, anti-tank launchers, mortars, and rocket launchers are easily available against hard cash.

A Stinger missile which had a price tag of Rs [rupees] 3.5 million has acquired a handsome raise and is now available against Rs. 5.5 million. However, a Pakistani dealer at the Darra market has offered to reduce the price to Rs. 4 million if all the twenty missiles he had in the store was purchased by this scribe. He disclosed that he had disposal of a few Stingers to certain influential figures of the country whose names he was reluctant to disclose. He further confided that some foreign diplomats are also interested in purchasing these arms.

An anti-tank launcher with a previous price of Rs. 100,000 is now available for a meagre R. 15,000. Similarly a rocket launcher could be purchased for Rs. 7,000 while previously it was available for Rs. 200,000 mortars have acquired all the time lowest price from 15,000 to Rs. 200 only [sentence as published]. Price of rockets with Rs. 700 to Rs. 1,000 earlier could now be purchased for Rs. 100 while the most sought after Kalashnikov is available for Rs 6,000.

It is worth mentioning that during the decade long Afghan guerilla war, a huge quantity of arms were supplied to Afghan Mojahedin which inflicted heavy losses to alien forces inside Afghanistan. These arms were stored in different depots in Pakistan under direct supervision of the army.

While war was still on in Afghanistan, some officers at the helm of affairs contrived to sell a large number of arms to well connected persons. A former governor of NWFP [Northwest Frontier Province] has allegedly disposed of a big quantity of arms which get its way to Iran through a religious figure.

The Pentagon had taken a note of it and sent a team to investigate the matter. The tragedy of Ojri camp is still a heart rendering story and a crime whose perpetrators are still at large though very much is in the knowledges of the Government.

The American investigation team after confirming the involvement of government officials in the pilferage of

arms, recommended that arms should directly be supplied to Afghan commanders to which government of Pakistan objected which however could not convince the Pentagon.

After the Najibollah volunteer stepping down from power and the consequent establishment of Najilah government in Afghanistan, American Government approached different groups to collect the Stinger missiles. The Afghan rebels however refused to oblige USA which Washington offered to purchase the same against payment of Rs. 1.8 million per missile. The Afghan groups turned down the request for they could fetch for more if sold in open market.

Certain Afghan commanders had hired Pakistani agents to make dealings with any potential buyer, local prospective or foreign. Handsome commission was offered to these agents.

Bulgaria To Supply Arms With No Strings Attached

BK0703141593 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1000 GMT 7 Mar 93

[Text] Bulgaria has assured Pakistan it will supply all equipment and arms and ammunition, along with the transfer of technology, with no strings attached. This was stated by Minister for Defense Production Mir Hazar Khan Bijarani while addressing a news conference in Rawalpindi this afternoon after his return from a visit to Bulgaria and Italy.

Bijarani met with the Bulgarian prime minister and his deputy. He said the Bulgarian leaders expressed their country's willingness to increase cooperation with Pakistan in defense production and other industries. On his way home, the Pakistani minister also visited Italy, where he inspected the prototype of a radar which will be installed on F-7 type aircraft.

Answering a question, the defense production minister said negotiations are continuing with France, Russia, and Poland for the purchase of tanks, submarines, and naval ships, with major emphasis on the transfer of technology, to strengthen the country's defense capability.

India Urged To Accept Sharif Proposal on Nuclear Talks

BK0903114593 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] Pakistan has urged India to agree to its proposal for convening a five-nation conference aimed at ensuring nuclear nonproliferation and establishing a nuclear weapon-free zone in South Asia. Speaking in the UN General Assembly's political and security committee, the secretary general of foreign affairs, Mr. Akram Zaki, said that Prime Minister Mohammad Nawaz Sharif's proposal made in June 1991 envisaged consultations among the United States, the Russian Federation, China, India,

and Pakistan to achieve the objective of denuclearization of the South Asian region. He said the proposal has been supported by four of the five proposed participants and welcomed by the world community. He expressed the hope that India, which has not agreed so far, will also take a positive view.

Mr. Akram Zaki also stressed the need for steps to reduce and control conventional weapons. He said Pakistan had also proposed measures for conventional arms reduction and disarmament in South Asia.

President Said Out of Touch With Economic Trends

BK0703103593 Islamabad THE NATION in English 7 Mar 93 p 6

["Who Is Responsible?"]

[Text] It has been reported that President Ghulam Ishaq Khan has sent a letter to the Prime Minister outlining a host of problems besetting the Pakistani economy. The implication being that the Prime Minister is directly responsible for the poor performance of our major economic indicators. The responsibility for a growing budget deficit and lavish spending by the present government can be attributed to the Cabinet of Mr Nawaz Sharif but a closer look at the past thirteen years' budgets shows the obvious fact that such trends were set during the rule of Ziaul Haq, when Mr Ishaq Khan served as a Finance Minister in the late 1970s and early 1980s. By 1983-84, the budget deficit as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product was 6 per cent; the following year it rose to 7.8 per cent. Contrast this with the 1991-92 deficit estimate of 5 per cent; or indeed the revised estimates for 1990-91 when the deficit was merely 5.8 per cent of GDP. Thus in this particular instance the President failed to recall the performance of the deficit during his tenure as Finance Minister which was infinitely worse than the situation today. Besides it may be recalled that Mr Nawaz Sharif has committed to the World Bank/IMF officials that his government will lower the deficit as a percentage of GDP in the forthcoming fiscal year. Thus, it seems, that the fears expressed by the President as mentioned in the report may have their root in political considerations rather than any concern over the economy of the country.

There is little doubt that the President and the Prime Minister subscribe to quite different schools of economic thought. The former is for large state control, heavy subsidisation and large budgetary outlay for general administration. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif is for market reform, privatisation, lower subsidies and deregulation. The Prime Minister is more in tune with the current popular trends in economic thought than President Ishaq Khan. It is also evident that there are problems in the economy. But what is important is that before criticising, the President ought to have looked at his own track record. That would have led him to conclude that the present government is not doing too

badly. Just like Ms Bhutto's government did not do too badly, comparatively speaking that is. But where considerations are political then such niceties can be ignored.

Sri Lanka

Diplomats Praise Premadasa's BBC Phone-In Interview

BK0803121593 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation Radio Network in English 1045 GMT 8 Mar 93

[Text] The foreign diplomatic community in Sri Lanka, representing both western and eastern countries, had high praise for President Ranasinghe Premadasa's handling of Sunday night's hour-long phone-in interview with the BBC in London. Questions from listeners from all parts of the world were answered by the president from Colombo.

Western diplomatic sources told LANKAPUVATH that President Premadasa's answers to questions ranging from human rights, the conflict with the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam], the economy, and media to garment quotas were very succinct, forthright, and well supported by statistics. South Asian diplomats described the president's answers as being extremely good and convincing. Mr. Premadasa's performance had boosted the image of Sri Lanka, nailed several canards and falsehoods, and given a clear and true picture of the situation in the country. A South Asian diplomat said that President Premadasa's very confident foresight and straightforward answers were particularly laudable in the context that leaders of certain other countries in the region had declined similar phone-in interviews.

When asked about the response to the statement made earlier to the BBC by LTTE's Prabhakaran, wherein he had expressed the desire to consider prospects for the resolution of the problems, the president replied what is necessary is not expressing a desire; he must cooperate fully with those who are trying to find a political solution. Why can't he submit his proposals for a resolution? Answering another question, he said that soon after his election as president in January 1989, he took a unilateral decision to invite the LTTE [words indistinct] to a discussion and to join the democratic process. Unfortunately, the president pointed out that in 1990 (?June), the LTTE turned it down again and started fighting. In answer to still another question, the president emphasized that the parliamentary select committee composed of all parties had been appointed to find a political solution which will be fair to all communities.

Exports to India Decline; Business Council Meets

BK0903114993 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation Radio Network in English 1045 GMT 9 Mar 93

[Text] The third meeting of the Indo-Sri Lanka Joint Business Council was inaugurated in Colombo yesterday. Leading industrialists and businessmen of both

countries participated. The objective of the meeting is to encourage large trading shares and widen industrial cooperation. The secretary to the ministry of trade and commerce, Mr. Gunatillake, inaugurating the two-day meeting at Hotel Taj Samudra noted the meeting was being held at an appropriate time when both countries have adopted the same strategy of economic liberalization. Referring to the trade between the two countries, Mr. Gunatillake noted that Sri Lankan exports to India were declining from 809 million rupees in 1990 to 437 million rupees in 1992. He stressed the need for boosting exports to India to balance the trade.

The new Indian high commissioner in Sri Lanka, Nareshwar Dayal, said that India was committed to promote intraregional trade. He also reminded that his country had supported the Sri Lankan proposal for the establishment of South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement, SAPTA, by 1995. He extended India's cooperation for a more balanced trade between the two countries.

Speaking on the occasion, the head of the Indian delegation, Mr. Muthukrishnan, said that his delegation was making efforts to reduce the unfavorable situation.

Successes Scored in Anti-LTTE Operations

BK0903100293 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0913 GMT 9 Mar 93

[“OANA/pool” item]

[Text] Colombo, Mar 9 (LANKAPUVATH)—While troops of operation ‘Sedapahara’ moved successfully southwest of Vavuniya and established a new area of control and a forward defense locality, Army commandos in operation ‘Fullmoon’ near Padaviya, north-east of Vavuniya, killed three LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists and seized their weapons.

A spokesman for the Joint Operation Command [JOC] told LANKAPUVATH that troops of operation ‘Sedapahara’ had met with little resistance from the terrorists, except for sporadic firing, and the LTTE cadres had abandoned their positions and fled in the wake of the oncoming government troops who have now established new bunker-lines adjoining the Cheddikulam Railway Station [words indistinct] Medavachchiya-Mannar highway, Muselkutti and the Malwatuoya Fort.

Meanwhile, troops of operation ‘Fullmoon’ probing the jungles west of Padaviya killed three terrorists and recovered two rifles, six Johnny mines and a few grenades.

Tamil Rebels Invite UN Agency To Open Talks on Ferry

BK0503161693 Hong Kong AFP in English 1016 GMT 5 Mar 93

[Text] Colombo, March 5 (AFP)—Tamil rebels have invited a United Nations agency to resume talks on

opening a ferry service in northern Sri Lanka to help civilians travel in an area declared a no-go zone by the military last year.

Officials from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) have already flown to the northern Jaffna peninsula, the main stronghold of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), to re-start talks, official sources said Friday.

The LTTE's invitation was a reversal of its decision last month to totally reject a UNHCR offer to mediate between the Tigers and security forces in a bid to open the ferry in the Jaffna lagoon.

Tamil sources said that one reason why the LTTE may have gone back on its earlier decision was that large numbers of civilians in Jaffna had expressed displeasure over the rebels' action in dismissing the UNHCR initiative.

Thousands of civilians in the peninsula have been at the mercy of severe travel restrictions imposed by both the rebels and security forces after the military declared the Jaffna lagoon a no-go zone since October.

The military designated a land route that could be used by civilians wanting to travel from the peninsula to the mainland but the Tigers, who virtually call all the shots in the peninsula, want civilians to travel via the lagoon.

During a meeting in Jaffna last month, LTTE leaders told UNHCR officials that negotiations on the ferry could not begin until the Sri Lankan government dismantled a nearby army camp.

At the time the UNHCR said it hoped the Tigers would change their mind due to the deteriorating food situation in the peninsula which is under military siege.

In a bid to purchase provisions from areas under government control in the mainland, thousands of Tamil civilians frequently cross the lagoon in small boats despite the risk of being killed by navy fire.

The navy has destroyed several boats alleged to have been carrying LTTE cadres but Tamils politicians have accused the navy of opening fire on civilian boat passengers and killing at least a dozen of them.

The LTTE is fighting to set up an independent homeland or Eelam in the northeast for Sri Lanka's minority Tamils who are concentrated in the region. Thousands have been killed in the separatist conflict.